Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you agree with the governor's call for another one-year delay to federalization?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS PHASE 5

As of May 22, 2009

Phase 1: Viruses circulating among animals have yet to cause infections in humans.

Phase 2: An animal influenza virus is causing infection in humans, and is considered a potential pandemic threat.

Phase 3: An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.

Phase 4: Verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks."

Phase 5: A strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

RP Trip

Officials and staff of NMC-CREES just came from a trip to agricultural research centers in the Philippines.

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NMC-CREES director to run as Rota representative. **PAGE 3**

DPH told to shed light on medical referral, CHC services

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The chairman of the House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare, Rep. Ralph DLG. Torres, has asked Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez to shed light on seven areas of operation including medical referral and current staffing following community concerns about DPH's services.

Torres gave Villagomez up to June 19 to respond in writing to his May 18 letter, or to meet with him next week.

Villagomez is currently on personal leave.

As of yesterday, Pete Untalan was designated as acting health secretary. When sought for comment, his office said he was in a meeting.

See DPH on Page 4

Torres

New hires despite hiring restrictions

HOUSE EXHIBIT HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, William Kurashima and Richard Cody, both architects at Tanaguchi Ruth Makio Architects, Marianas Baptist Academy principal Ramiro Trinidad, and Marshall Liban pose beside one of the miniature house entries during MBA's "Best House Design Contest" yesterday.

New employees began working 2-10 days after budget law passage

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The government hired an administrative assistant, a clinical attendant and a conservation technician right after the enactment of the Fiscal Year 2009 budget that restricts hiring until Sept. 30, 2009 except for critical positions and replacement hires.

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Investments in CNMI stir interest in Korea

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Flame Sako Resort & Spa's $60 million to $80 million proposed hotel on Saipan and Neo Gold Wings Paradise's proposed $300 million casino on Tinian are among the two Korean-owned projects in the CNMI

See INVESTMENTS on Page 4

Bang Jae-Sun, second from left, chairman of the board of the Korean-based newspaper, *The Chosun Ilbo*, and reporter Choi Won Soon, second from right, talk to reporters while Public Lands Secretary John Del Rosario, center, and Flame Sako Resort & Spa strategic planning manager Won Suk Bang, right, listen during a visit to the Department of Public Lands office on Thursday. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

'WHY WAIT FOR GUILTY VERDICT BEFORE PROBING JUROR RELATIONSHIPS?'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. government is questioning why lawyers of former Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez and co-defendants James A. Santos and Joaquina V. Santos waited until the guilty verdict came out before looking into the alleged relationship of some jurors with witnesses in the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric O'Malley said the U.S. government is not convinced at this point that Villagomez and the Santos couple learned of these juror relationships only after the jury re-

See WHY WAIT on Page 4

3rd Annual
FIREHOUSE "OPEN HOUSE"
Family Fun Day
May 23, 2009 Fire Station 5, Kagman from 9am to 2pm
FREE Food, Drinks and Lots of Prizes
EMSC Emergency Medical Services for Children
EMS A Proud Partner In Your Community
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Local

'Most confirmed H1N1 cases are in younger people'

The largest number of H1N1 confirmed and probable cases are occurring in people from the ages of 5 to 24, according to the latest health update from the CNMI Department of Public Health Emergency Operations Center.

Many of the reported cases are school children, following a dramatic increase in Japan in the last few days.

According to the DPH public notice, people who are at high risk of serious seasonal flu-related complications include children younger than 5 years old, pregnant women, people with chronic medical conditions, and those who are 65 years and older.

DPH said it could not to find a pattern that would explain why these groups of people are at higher risk of serious complications from the virus.

DPH is therefore warning these high-risk groups, especially pregnant women, to take precautions, be aware of warning signs, and seek medical care as soon as possible.

Although there is no confirmed cases yet of H1N1 flu in the CNMI, the islands' are still at pandemic alert level 5, as declared by the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

WHO reported that as of May 21, the total number of countries affected went up to 41, with 11,034 cases, including 85 deaths.

In the U.S., CDC reported a total of 5,764 confirmed cases in 48 US states since Thursday, May 21, including nine deaths. The most recent reported death occurred in a 22-year-old in Utah.

At the Saipan International Airport, all foreign visitors are subjected to stringent screening procedures. Staff from the DPH provide information materials and ask basic questions whether the incoming and departing passengers are not feeling well. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

PMT names new president

Acting Gov. Eloy Inos, left, joins former PMT president Katsuaki Kobayashi, center, and the new PMT president, Nobuyasu Kanamaru for a souvenir picture.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacific Micronesia Tours announced Thursday its new president, Nobuyasu Kanamaru, following formal turnover ceremonies early this week at the Giovanni Restaurant of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Kanamaru, who replaced Katsuaki Kobayashi, met with acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos during the welcome and farewell party.

Inos, who was the keynote speaker, praised Kobayashi for his efforts to help the CNMI tourism industry.

Kobayashi was the president of PMT Japan office for several years until his retirement this year.

Kanamaru was appointed to replace him effective April 1.

PMT is one of the group of companies under JTB Corp., based in Japan.

PMT is the single most important company that oversees the travel of Japanese tourists throughout the world, including Micronesia, mostly to Guam and CNMI.

PMT says Kanamaru has promised to do his best to continue promoting Guam and the CNMI to Japanese tourists.

In his message, Inos recognized PMT for its many years of service to the community and the tourism industry.

"I am sure that with this transition, the highest standards of tourism excellence will be maintained and upheld for the benefit of PMT and our local community," he said. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

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NMC-CREES director to run as Rota representative

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
Moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The director of the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services program, Ross Manglona, will run for the House of Representative for the island of Rota and would seek the Republican Party's endorsement.

Manglona, who has been with the college for 14 years, plans to take a leave from his job once he is certified by the Commonwealth Election Commission.

Prior to becoming the NMC-CREES director, Manglona was the program's extension agent for 13 years.

He confirmed yesterday that he will submit his letter of intent to GOP officials before end of this month.

Manglona

Manglona admitted that it took him six years to finalize his decision after getting the full support of family members and friends.

"It's not an overnight decision. It required a lot of consultations with the family members because I believe deciding without their support would be useless," he said.

The decision was also be based on the right "timing" and "urgency."

"I think this is the right timing and there's an urgent need for me to run," he said.

Manglona is the first cousin of former Rota representative Crispin Ogo. Now that incumbent Rep. Victor Hocog has announced his intention to run for the municipality's mayoralty post, Manglona said there's a great need to install somebody who will continue the "movement" for Rota.

He lauded the work done by the incumbent representative, describing Hocog as a "sound and stable" politician.

Manglona is convinced that he can help build a good relationship between Saipan and Rota, Tinian and Rota.

Under the Board of Regents policy, any employee who wishes to run for any public office is allowed to take a personal leave from service and may return to the position if not elected.

Once he gets the endorsement of the GOP, Manglona says he will lay down his campaign platform for the people of Rota.

Want to be a wildland firefighter?

The U.S. Forest Service is looking for highly motivated people to train and become wildland firefighters.

The physical test, called the "Work Capacity Test," is slated for June 6 to June 9. Prospective candidates should be able to hike (no running or jogging) three miles with a 45 lb backpack in 45 minutes.

DPS Fire will administer the test, also called the "Pack Test," while U.S. Forest Service Region 5 representatives will certify the test.

Candidates who pass the arduous test and have the proper documents will be eligible for deployment to stateside wildland fire incidents, should the need arise.

The U.S. Forest Service has been providing on-site trainings to potential wildland firefighters. These trainings prepare local firefighters to work in organized hand crews during wildland fire seasons (generally from June-November) upon deployment request from the U.S. Forest Service, Region 5 Office.

For more information, contact the DPS Fire Prevention & Arson Investigation Section at 664-9032/9116. Additional participant information could also be accessed and downloaded at www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/2002/brochure_pdf. ***(PR)***

Insular area amendments added to energy measure

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Unanimous agreement in the House Energy and Commerce Committee was in short supply as a showpiece bill authored by chairmen Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Edward Markey (D-MA) and aimed at moving the U.S. to a more sustainable energy future entered its second day of mark-up.

With Republicans warning of the costs to the economy of caps on carbon dioxide emitting power plants and even some Democrats from areas heavily dependent on coal or the petroleum industry sometimes splitting with leadership, the votes on amendments have at times been contentious and tense.

But one thing the entire committee seemed able to agree on was that the U.S. insular areas should be treated fairly and needed a helping hand if they too were to find a path to an energy future less polluting and less dependent on oil.

Voting Tuesday night, the committee unanimously agreed to an amendment to give the insular areas the same access as states to a grant program designed to reduce hazardous emissions from diesel engines. On Wednesday the committee again unanimously agreed to a proposal to send a team of energy and finance experts to each insular area to help local governments design a specific plan of action to get off oil and onto more sustainable sources of energy.

The amendments were based on standalone bills introduced by Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" C. (D-MP) and Rep. Donna Christensen (D-VI). Sablan's bill, H.R. 2386, makes all the U.S. insular areas—American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Marianas—equally eligible for the Diesel Emissions Reduction Program administered by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"This program was created in the 2005 Energy Policy Act," Sablan said. "But apparently the U.S. insular areas fell through the cracks back then. So, I introduced legislation—and all of the insular area representatives signed off—that gave us the same access to grants as each state and the District of Columbia."

Sablan estimates that the Commonwealth could receive about half a million dollars in grants in both 2010 and 2011 from the program.

"We've got plenty of diesel engines in buses, trucks, boats, and power plants that are not burning cleanly and not extracting as much energy as they could from the fuel that's being burned," said Sablan.

"These grant funds would be used for replacing those older, less efficient diesel engines with more modern, EPA-certified engines. That will both save money and help save the environment."

Christensen's bill, H.R. 2385, requires the Secretary of Energy to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts and send the team to the islands to develop action plans that would reduce the use of imported fossil fuels and increase the use of indigenous clean-energy resources. Christensen's bill, too, had the support of all the Members of Congress from the U.S. insular areas.

"Even though H.R. 2385 and 2386 had been introduced, it was really the effort of Donna Christensen on the Energy and Commerce Committee that moved things forward," Sablan explained. "She has been working—literally from morning to night—as the Committee moves through this massive energy and climate change bill. ***(PR)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Public invited to Monday's Memorial Day rites

The Office of Military/Veterans Affairs and the Memorial Day Committee are reminding the public to come, celebrate and honor the brave men and women who served with unwavering dedication and purpose and paid the ultimate sacrifice to keep the world safe, and secure the freedom we enjoy today.

Memorial Day ceremony will be at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery in Marpi on Monday, May 25, at 9am. The Pacific Winds Concert Band will begin with the pre-ceremonial music at 8:30am. Keynote speaker will be Rear Adm. William French, Commander Naval Forces Marianas and Navy Region. ***(PR)***

Marpi closed off Friday next week

The Marpi area will be closed off on May 29, 2009, from 12pm to 3pm for the detonation operation that will be jointly conducted by the Department of Public Safety, the Emergency Management Office, and the U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment Marianas.

The general location of activity will be at the Laderan Laggun Cliff Line (a mile north of Marpi landfill). The grid coordinates is 15 degrees, 16.11 minutes 0.0865 seconds North and 145 degrees, 49 minutes 0.3313 seconds East and 5,000 feet above sea level.

The only area that will not be closed off will be Suicide Cliff, which will be the main viewing point for the detonation. Public access to Suicide Cliff—particularly for tour and dive operators, farmers, joggers and bikers—is allowed only through the road leading up to the Far East Broadcasting antenna for viewing purposes. DPS will set security posts to enforce and control traffic movement for safety purposes. ***(PR)***

DEQ to clean up Sugar Dock

The Division of Environmental Quality cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at Sugar Dock in Susupe on Saturday, June 6, 2009, at 8am.

Volunteers will split into groups, cleaning the Sugar Dock area and south to Laly 4 Beach until 10am, break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This is a cleanup that should not be missed, so join DEQ's cleanup brigade and "Pick It Up!" Let us work together for the health of our coral reefs and cleanliness of our beaches for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500. ***(PR)***

Sailors help prepare Veteran's Cemetery for Memorial Day

SANTA RITA, Guam—USS *Frank Cable* sailors will clean and paint at the Veteran's Cemetery in Piti today, May 23, in preparation for Memorial Day.

The volunteer work is part of the Navy's commitment to build and harbor strong and lasting relationships with the community and support the island through various community relations projects and events.

As Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet's only operational submarine tender, *Frank Cable* deploys to ports throughout the Western Pacific to provide services to both submarines and surface ships in the Seventh Fleet area of responsibility. ***(PR)***

NAVFAC to Volunteer at Special Olympics aquatics event

SANTA RITA, Guam—U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas Sailors will volunteer during the Special Olympics Aquatics event today, May 23, at Hagatna Swimming Pool.

For the past several weeks, sailors have been volunteering with Special Olympics athletes as mentors and coaches in support of the Navy's commitment to the community through various community relations functions and events.

The Guam Special Olympics mission is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. ***(PR)***

ERRATUM

The front page photo in the May 22 issue of *Saipan Tribune* wrongly identified Rep. Francisco Dela Cruz as Rep. Justo Quitugua. Our apologies.

INVESTMENTS

From Page 1

that are stirring investment interest in Korea.

The confidence on the CNMI market shown by these two groups of businesses will be among the points of interest that the biggest publication in South Korea will highlight in their feature about the Commonwealth as investment hub for South Koreans.

Bang Jae-Sun, chairman of the board of *The Chosun Ilbo*, and reporter Choi Won Soon visited Saipan on Thursday to gather information about the CNMI.

"When we go back to Korea, we will write an article in the newspaper about how Saipan is attractive for tourists and investors," said Bang.

The *Chosun Ilbo* owns daily, weekly and monthly publications, along with a TV station, reaching out to some 10 million readers. Its daily prides itself as the most influential newspaper in Korea.

In an interview with reporters in the office of Public Lands Secretary John Del Rosario, Bang said he could guarantee a $10 billion investment in a month once they fully promote the CNMI as an investment place among Korean investors.

Bang said the CNMI's good climate and it being the nearest U.S. territory to major Asian countries make it an ideal investment place for Koreans. But he said investors are keeping a close watch on developments related to the federalization of CNMI immigration.

Bang said his visit to Saipan is a private one. He was accompanied by reporter Choi Won Soon. After a courtesy visit to acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos, they proceeded to DPL.

Del Rosario said enticing new foreign investors is important in these tough economic times.

Won Suk Bang, strategic planning manager of Flame Sako Resort & Spa, accompanied the Korean media representatives during their visit to Saipan.

Flame Sako lease payment

In related news, Won said Flame Sako's deadline for submitting to DPL a financial plan along with an architectural and engineering design is Aug. 30, and not April 30.

DPL's Del Rosario confirmed this, pointing to an error in the date stated in the lease agreement between DPL and Flame Sako, which previously stated an earlier deadline. He said the error was recognized by the legal counsels of DPL and the Flame Sako, along with the members of the Legislature.

The lease agreement was signed on Feb. 4, and the deadline for submitting a financial plan is six months later or in August. With the corrected date in the lease deal, Flame Sako's first lease payment by end-August will be $52,320.

Won said the company has already invested $300,000 in the CNMI in the past year.

DPH

From Page 1

In his two-page letter, Torres asked Villagomez about the current number of patients under medical referral, the names of the hospitals they are referred to, the number of patients on the waiting list, the standard operating procedures for patients referred, which agency incurs the cost of housing patients at Capital Hotel, the costs involved for each emergency medical evacuation, and the cost to transport one patient on air ambulance.

"As I am sure you are aware, the community has voiced their concerns and has cried out for adequate services at the Commonwealth Health Center," Torres told Villagomez.

The lawmaker also asked for clarification on the status of the Diabetes Prevention Program, which community activist Ed Propst earlier said is being shut down. Untalan earlier clarified that the program is still operational.

Propst said there are over 100 dialysis patients in the CNMI, yet there is only a measly $73,000 annual budget for the program.

Torres also asked the health secretary whether the Psychiatric Center has any full-time psychiatrists on board and whether the department has any plan to provide proper services and medication for persons in the CNMI who are mentally ill.

He also asked about the number and area of practice of the current doctors at CHC, whether full-time or part-time. Torres also asked about the number of nurses, and the number per shift, as well as the ideal number to best serve the patients.

Unreasonably long wait hours for patients

Torres said community members have expressed concern about unreasonably long waiting time for patients at the hospital, and asked the health secretary to shed light on the matter.

He asked about PHI Pharmacy's relationship with CHC, and PHI's procedures in obtaining and stocking medication.

Also included in the inquiry were the standards procedures when a patient enters the Emergency Room and the difficulties and challenges that DPH's Collections and Billing department faces.

"Please describe why Hawaii and Guam are not, or are hesitant in, accepting our Medicaid patients. Include in your answer the number of consultants on board and the services they provide," Torres said.

The lawmaker asked Villagomez to include other information he feels are important in assisting the House committee in addressing the current situation at CHC, and proposed solutions.

WHY WAIT

From Page 1

turned the verdict.

"The circumstances and sequence of events described by the defendants is, to say the least, suspicious," said O'Malley in the U.S. government's response to the defendants' motions for a new trial or judgment of acquittal.

The federal jury declared Villagomez and the Santos couple guilty on April 24. Seven days later, the defendants filed several motions, including motions for a judgment of acquittal or a new trial based on allegations that the defense had learned after the verdict that some of the witnesses were related to some of the jurors.

David J. Lujan, lead counsel for Villagomez, stated that after the jury verdict, the defense obtained information that at least five jurors and one alternate juror were related to key government witnesses or a government investigator who assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"Based on such information, the defense retained a genealogist to determine the familial relations of jurors and government witnesses and to obtain their family trees," Lujan said.

O'Malley said that, assuming without conceding that the defendants' genealogical survey is accurate, the U.S. government still takes issue with the defendants' bald assertion that each juror was aware of their relationship with the witnesses.

"Jurors may come from large and/or disassociated families. It defies reason to charge them with knowing each of their first, second and third cousins—a list which could easily number into the hundreds. There is no legal authority to impute such knowledge, and the court should not adopt one here," he said.

The prosecutor argued that the question is whether the jurors responded (or remained silent) as they did with dishonest intent.

"The defendants identify no statement or piece of evidence that would suggest that any juror acted with dishonest intent or deliberately concealed any information," he said.

O'Malley said it takes 12 votes to convict a defendant, but only one vote to hang a jury.

"The fact that all 12 jurors, at least four of whom were related to the defense team, reached a unanimous verdict after just a few hours of deliberation, is testament to the strength of the government's evidence in this case," he said.

In addition to waiving objections to specific jurors, the defendants also made a general waiver as to the entire panel, O'Malley said.

"The defendants could have investigated or made inquiries about potential relationships between witnesses and jurors at any point prior to the verdict, or for that matter, several days before trial," he said.

Yet the three defendants, with at least five attorneys and two investigators, made no inquiries or investigation over the course of a four-week trial, he said.

"The defense counsel's failure to perform their due diligence has waived their defendants' right to object," he added.

NEW HIRES

From Page 1

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed the $156.76 million FY 2009 budget law on March 13.

Two days later, an administrative assistant started working for $24,999.52 a year.

The administrative assistant's salary was much higher than the $13,703.04 annual salary of the clinical attendant 1 who started working three days after the budget bill became law.

A conservation technician earning $11,279.84 a year started working on March 23.

Isidro K. Seman, acting director of the Office of Personnel Management, provided a list of new hires since the enactment of Public Law 16-32 on March 13, in response to an inquiry from Rep. Ray N. Yumul.

Yumul, the chairman the House Ways and Means Committee, told *Saipan Tribune* that there may be other new government hires but said he has yet to get more information because the OPM director's letter covered only between March 13 and April 21.

"I would understand hiring a clinical attendant because it's a critical health staff, but an administrative assistant when we have problems with the budget?" Yumul said.

The budget law restricts hiring of new employees in any branch of the government, including public corporations, municipalities, boards, commissions, authorities, and independent agencies until Sept. 30, 2009.

It, however, allows replacement hires that are deemed critical to the delivery of public service, but only with the approval of the House speaker and the Senate president.

"As chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, it is my fiduciary responsibility to make sure that government expenditures are kept within the limits allotted by law," Yumul told Seman in a letter.

The $156.76 million FY 2009 budget, which includes $148 million from local collections, became law after the House overrode the governor's veto. The Senate also overrode the veto.

The new budget allows for more than 4,000 full-time employees.

MTEC awards top schools for islandwide cleanup

The Marianas Tourism Education Council has awarded cash prizes to several schools for their participation in the April 2009 Earth Day Islandwide cleanup.

MTEC divided $1,000 among the top schools with the highest percentage of student turnout for the cleanup.

The winning schools were Hopwood Jr. High School ($350), Garapan Elementary School ($200), and W.S.Reyes Elementary School ($100). San Vicente Elementary School was also awarded separately on the occasion by Beautify CNMI!

After receiving their check from MTEC on behalf of their school, students of the My WAVE (Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically) club at W.S. Reyes Elementary said the cleanup was a worthy investment.

"It's a great experience to help tourism and make our island beautiful," said Aiko Erungel.

"Make our island clean so more tourists will come!" added schoolmate Shizuka Takayama.

Beautify CNMI! partners Division of Environmental Quality, Rotary Club, and Marianas Visitors Authority invited all residents to plant a tree, paint over some graffiti or cleanup a road or a beach during the event.

"Our young people are the future of tourism," said MTEC chair Ed Cho. "MTEC is excited to partner with the schools to help get students involved in tourism today, and we're pleased to award the students that helped during the Islandwide Cleanup." ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local school reps recently received monetary awards from Marianas Tourism Education Council for having the most participation during the April Earth Day Islandwide Cleanup. Front left at the Marianas Visitors Authority office are W.S. Reyes Elementary My WAVE club adviser Monica Pangelinan; My WAVE club members Shizuka Takayama, Aiko Erungel and Raechelyn Hernandez; and San Vincente Elementary acting vice principal Betty Miller. At rear from left are MVA Community Programs manager Martin Duenas, Islandwide Cleanup coorganizer Angelo Villagomez, MTEC chair Ed Cho, and Garapan Elementary vice principal Dale Roberts.

'Champ' exhibits bartending skills tonight at Taste

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

World-class bartender Hwang Kyung Rok of Korea will exhibit his skills anew in tonight's bartenders competition at the 2009 Taste of the Marianas Food Festival and Beer Garden at the American Memorial Park.

Rok, aka Champ of the Bar Flair, is best remembered for his third place finish in the 2004 Go Shake Cup, considered the Bartenders Olympics.

This year's event will showcase the best bartenders in the CNMI representing some of the hotels and restaurants, mostly from Saipan.

The event will start at 8pm.

The participating bartenders are Ramil Eustaquio (Wonderful Bar), Jojo Solmarin (Moby Dick Restaurant), Emil Gammad and Jovel San Juan (Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino), Glen Aquino (Aqua Resort Club), Bernardine Aquino and Amapola Castro (Hyatt Regency Saipan), Rommel Usi and Willie Garon (Fiesta Resort & Spa), Rio Therese and Ji-hyun Kang (Pacific Island Club), Kenneth Cruzat (Country House Restaurant), Marlon Pineda (Saipan World Resort) and Michael Lim (Country Bar).

The two contestants in the Battle of Champions are Jay Torres of Aqua Resort Club and Jay Santos of The Flair.

This year's sponsors include Marianas Visitors Authority, MARPAC Burnett's Vodka, Duty Free Shop, IT&E, Coca-Cola, Tinian Dynasty and Casino, and Jam-V Fashion Design.

Aside from the $75 cash, trophy and other gift items from DFS, the first prize winner will also get a one night stay at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino.

Lito Espino, president of the Marianas Bartenders Association, said this annual competition aims to build self-confidence, pride and professionalism among the islands' bartenders.

"This is also intended to develop a more competitive attraction for tourists. The NMBA is not only another association but a helpful and productive one," he said.

Espino said their group participates in most of the islands' tourist-related affairs as part of their goal to attract more foreign visitors.

"We want to strengthen the bond between fellow bartenders, enhance their skill and knowledge through seminars, workshop, and competition like this," Espino said.

ATTENTION ALL MARINERS

Communication Act
Safety Radiotelephony
Certificate License
Inspector Alton
Ledoux will be arriving
this Sunday.

For more info, e-mail
xtal@teleguam.net

TASTE OF THE
MARIANAS
2009
INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL AND BEER GARDEN
AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK
MAY 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 2009
Saturday, May 23, 2009
6:00 p.m.- 6:30 p.m. Project Impact Hip Hop Dancers
6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Southern Cross Dancers
7:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Cab Dancers (Representing Palau and Chuuk)
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Big Beats Band (Steve Sablan)
8:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. INATUAS (Polynesian Show)
9:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Chingum Band
2009 Taste of the Marianas Food Festival & Beer Garden (vendors):
1. Aqua Resort Club, Saipan
2. Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan
3. Hafadai Beach Hotel
4. Hyatt Regency Saipan
5. Pacific Islands Club Saipan
6. Canton Restaurant
7. Saipan World Resort
8. Sierra Pearl Shakes
9. Capricciosa & Tony Roma's
10. D'Elegance Café
11. Herman's Modern Bakery
12. Hula Girl/3's
13. Thai House Restaurant
14. Poon's Restaurant
15. Ty & Tia
Beer Garden Vendors:
Pacific Trading Company
MARPAC
Northern Marianas Bartender Association
"Hafa Adai Tirow Spirit" Islandwear Fridays
Every Friday in May is Hafa Adai Tirow Spirit Islandwear Friday! Show your island pride and culture by wearing island attire or local traditional wear. Share your favorite islandwear shots of yourself, your friends, co-workers, and family on Facebook at "Hafa Adai Tirow Spirit Islandwear in the Northern Mariana Islands.
Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden
The highly anticipated weekly celebration will be held every Saturday in May at the American Memorial Park from 6-10 p.m. The event will feature delicious local and international cuisine sold by over 15 hotels and local restaurants. Enjoy the talent of local and international performers with live entertainment all evening. Learn more about the industry through game competitions.
My Marianas Community Outreach Presentation
Learn about the latest industry trends and upcoming tourism events during this slideshow at Taste of the Marianas and Garapan Street Market. Tourism Month informational packages will also be available on-site.
On-the-Street Interviews
MVA turns the spotlight turns on you, as random community members share their views on various tourism topics in this regular newspaper feature with questions and short answers.
Radio Tourism Trivia
Call in with the correct answer for your chance to win tokens for the Taste of the Marianas and Tourism Month T-shirts. "Did you Know?" and "Fun Facts about Tourism in the Northern Marianas" will be air regularly throughout the month on Power 99, 97.9 FM The KAT, and 103.9 FM KZMI.
KSPN 2 Tourism Month Calendar
May Tourism Month events are highlighted through out the month on cable television for your easy reference on KSPN2.
Saipan Tinian Rota
For more information contact the Marianas Visitors Authority at telephone numbers (670) 664-3200/01.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

A good credit card bill... that isn't really needed

Why, you might ask, did Congress pass new credit card legislation just months after the Federal Reserve Board adopted what Fed Chairman Ben S. Bernanke described as "the most comprehensive and sweeping reforms" of credit card accounts? The legislation isn't identical to the Fed reforms, but it is awfully similar. As much as anything, this is about Congress not wanting to let a ripe issue go by—especially one with more popular appeal than, say, bailing out banks.

Redundant as the bill might be, the basic changes make sense. Credit card contracts, and all the fine print that comes with them, have become far more complex over the years; few would disagree with that. To help clarify the terms, the Fed issued a number of changes under the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Truth in Lending Act. Included were requirements for simplified language to help customers understand what they are agreeing to, requirements for a 45-day notice of rate increases (rather than 15), and summary tables of changes in key borrowing terms to make the information more obvious. The Fed also restricted the circumstances under which interest rates could be increased on outstanding balances or accounts with promotional rates; ensured that consumers have adequate time between receiving a bill and having to make a payment; prohibited double-cycle billing; and required that payments be applied to balances carrying the highest interest rates or across the board on balances carrying different rates and not just to balances with the lowest rates.

The Fed rules aren't scheduled to take effect until July 1, 2010, and Congress wanted to speed things up: That's the rationale for a legislative package. However, the time Congress has taken to put the bill together means most changes won't be phased in much sooner than the Federal Reserve rules will be. Congress also has added some measures, including penalty restrictions and disclosure requirements regarding how long it would take to pay off a debt if only the minimum amount were paid each month, as well as an absurd provision that would allow visitors to national parks to carry concealed weapons. But for the most part, the legislation is strikingly similar to what is already set to be phased in.

Increasing clarity is sensible. The new restrictions also make sense on balance, though there will be trade-offs: lending, especially to small businesses and low-income people, who happen to be the riskiest borrowers, will be negatively affected. Fortunately, Congress has resisted the bad idea of placing a cap on the interest rates that companies can charge. Overall, ending the model under which profits stem from customer confusion is a sensible reform—even if Congress didn't need to jump into the game to get us there.

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

I PROMISED TO CLOSE DOWN GITMO...
BUT THE PRISONERS CAN'T GO BACK TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES... OUR ALLIES WON'T TAKE 'EM...
AND CONGRESS DOESN'T WANT ANY IN THEIR DISTRICTS!
MAYBE THE ACLU WILL TAKE THEM ON THEIR PLANET...
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The lesson of tenured teachers

By SIGRID BATHEN
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Well into the 20th century, teachers in the United States were treated as school property, paid meager salaries and expected to do the bidding of boards and principals.

Black teachers of either sex could teach only in substandard segregated schools, and female teachers—black or white—could be summarily dismissed for all variety of reasons: wearing skirts above the ankle, being out in the evenings or even getting married.

Mary Louise Phillips was a young elementary school teacher in Phoenix in fall 1941. She was teaching her first class of third-graders in a segregated school and quietly seeing a fellow teacher she had met in college, Wilson Riles, who worked seven hours of treacherous mountain roads away, at a one-room school for the children of black sawmill workers in the tiny northern Arizona town of McNary.

The two young teachers wanted to get married—but if they did, she would lose her Phoenix job immediately.

"Wilson said I had to consent to marry him," recalls Mary Louise Riles, now 89, "or he'd have to stop making that drive."

So they eloped, managing to keep the marriage secret for a couple of months, until she joined her husband as a teacher in McNary, where the rules for married teachers were less rigid.

Three decades later, Wilson Riles was elected California superintendent of public instruction, becoming California's first black elected to statewide office.

The origins of teacher tenure are firmly rooted in rank discrimination against women and were closely tied to the women's-rights movement.

California was the first state to mandate "permanent" status for teachers, after two years on the job, in 1921. Other states followed. But most of those gains were swept away in the midst of the Great Depression. And in one form or another, capricious, even sexist rules governing teachers were commonplace well into the 1960s and '70s. All teachers were at risk if they spoke out at board meetings or engaged in political activity that went against prevailing opinions in their districts.

In one key California case, Paul Finot, who taught at John Muir High School in Pasadena, was reassigned to home teaching in 1963 for refusing to shave a beard he'd grown over the summer. Eventually vindicated by an appeals court, he was asked in a lower court hearing if his beard was "an outgrowth" of his "radicalism," and he replied that it was "an outgrowth of my six-week fishing trip."

It was in that era that newly emergent teachers unions used their growing clout to challenge the laws and push for tenure everywhere—along with better pay, collective bargaining and due process in disciplinary actions that included the establishment of a quasijudicial system to oversee dismissals.

But nearly four decades after those victories, the system originally designed to improve working conditions and protect teachers against arbitrary terminations has evolved into a tangled and costly bureaucratic nightmare.

Critics argue that tenure protects incompetent teachers beyond all reason, keeping them on at a time when schools face draconian budget cuts, high dropout rates and gaping inequalities. Teachers groups counter that teachers deserve due process and that administrators fail to properly document and prove poor teaching.

Although measures to curb abuses of the dismissal process, and even to abolish tenure altogether, have been recently introduced in several states, such measures continue to meet fierce opposition from teachers unions, which are loath to give up any of the hard-won job protections built up over decades.

Clearly, the public's patience is wearing thin. The layoffs of thousands of mostly younger, newly minted teachers in budget-strapped California has only exacerbated disaffection with the deeply troubled seniority system, which governs layoffs as well as assignments of "surplus" teachers when schools are closed or programs cut.

Privately, and sometimes publicly, traditionally warring education organizations—teachers unions and school administrators—insist they want lousy teachers removed from the classroom. But they rarely stand together on a viable solution. Schools need better documentation of incompetent teaching, more support for teachers and fewer standardized directives on how to teach. All of this requires cooperation and compromise, and costs money.

Any overhaul of "post-tenure" teacher discipline must peel away multiple layers of administrative and legislative changes made over decades in order to create a more sensible and coherent system—one that recognizes the due-process rights of teachers as well as ways to help them move on.

But any movement toward streamlining the process must begin with less finger pointing and more serious dialogue among the key players in state education policy. This is not a new sentiment—but one that remains singularly unpopular in the state Capitol, where teachers unions (and their hefty campaign contributions) wield enormous clout.

Bathen is a longtime education writer who teaches journalism at California State University, Sacramento.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Population isn't a problem when women are well served

By MICHELLE GOLDBERG
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Goldberg is the author of The Means of Reproduction: Sex, Power, and the Future of the World.

There are two ways to look at world population numbers.

By one measure, the world has grown beyond its capacity. As Hillary Rodham Clinton's science adviser, Nina V. Fedoroff, recently told the BBC: "The planet can't support many more people."

But in parts of Europe and other developed countries, the problem isn't too many people but too few: Dwindling birthrates have prompted concerns about whether a shrinking pool of young people will be able to maintain the social safety net for the previous generation.

Politically, the discussion about population is deeply polarized. Conservatives talk about falling birthrates in almost apocalyptic terms, suggesting Europe is being punished for its sins of secularism and feminism. Best-selling author Mark Steyn has predicted "the demise of European races too self-absorbed to breed," while 2008 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney warned that "Europe is facing demographic disaster." Liberals, meanwhile, tend to see the Malthusian specter of overpopulation as a far greater threat.

So who is right? Is our future endangered by overpopulation or underpopulation? The answer is both. But in an elegant irony, the two problems have the same solution: giving women more control over their fertility and their lives. Both very high birthrates and very low ones threaten social stability, and both, it turns out, are symptoms of countries' failures to meet women's needs.

Right now, the world's population is growing at the unsustainable rate of 78 million people a year, and according to the United Nations, it will probably keep growing at 70 million or 75 million a year through 2020. Almost all of that growth is in the slums of the Third World. As former CIA Director Michael V. Hayden said in a speech last year, "By mid-century, the best estimates point to a world population of more than 9 billion. That's a 40 percent to 45 percent increase—striking enough—but most of that growth is almost certain to occur in the countries least able to sustain it. Places where swelling population is likely to fuel instability and extremism—not just in those areas but beyond them as well."

The ethical and effective way to counter rapid population growth is to bolster women's rights and improve their access to family planning. Education is crucial—study after study has found that girls who go to school marry later and have fewer, healthier children. Access to contraception is also key. According to the Guttmacher Institute, almost one-quarter of married women in sub-Saharan Africa have an unmet need for birth control. In a number of Latin American and African countries, more than 40 percent of recent births are said to be unwanted. Meanwhile, high rates of unsafe, illegal abortion—responsible for 13 percent of maternal mortality globally, according to the World Health Organization—speak to women's desperation to control their fertility.

At the same time, several developed countries, including Japan, Russia, Italy and Spain, have what appears to be the opposite problem. A stable population requires each woman to have an average of 2.1 children. (The extra one-tenth of a percent accounts for early deaths.) Demographers say that countries can adapt without much trouble to fertility that is a few tenths of a percent less than that. However, below about 1.7 children per woman, economic growth, pension systems and general cultural viability all come into question as a shrinking pool of young people is forced to support a growing number of the aged.

Italy, for example, has a fertility rate of 1.3 children per woman.

One leading demographer estimated that if Italy's 1995 birthrate remained stable over 100 years, then without immigration its population a century hence would be a mere 14 percent of what it is today.

That kind of population decline can't simply be remedied with immigration without causing major cultural upheavals and nationalist backlashes.

Some social conservatives are using the threat of rapid First World population decline to argue for restrictions on women's rights. But that gets it precisely backward. In developing countries, lower social status for women is associated with higher fertility, but once societies become highly industrialized and women taste a certain amount of freedom, the reverse is true.

Fertility is reaching dangerously low levels in countries where social attitudes and institutions haven't caught up with women's desire to combine work and family. When faced with men who are unwilling to share domestic burdens, inflexible workplaces and day-care shortages, many women respond by having fewer children or forgoing motherhood altogether.

But when societies make it possible for women to combine having children with pursuing their other ambitions, fertility rates are fine. It works differently in different cultures. In Scandinavia and France, working mothers are aided by lavish state support. Britain and the United States lack such generous benefits, but their flexible, even volatile labor markets lessen the importance of working uninterrupted at a single job, providing more on-ramps for mothers to return to the work force. As one group of Yale political scientists wrote, a mother's "job insecurity becomes less of a liability when everyone is insecure."

It's counterintuitive at first, but it turns out that the more opportunity women in developed countries have to work, the more likely they are to have children, because they can do so without giving up their other dreams.

"The evidence from Italy, and indeed from Spain, is that a traditional family structure now leads to very low birthrates," David Willetts, a British member of Parliament and a Tory renowned for his intellect, concluded in a report on Europe's pension woes. Modern family policy, he wrote, must be about enabling women's choices so that they needn't forgo childbearing in order to have satisfying careers and egalitarian marriages. "Feminism," he wrote, "is the new natalism."

In coming decades, Europeans will constitute a declining percentage of the world's people. When the 20th century began, the population of Europe was three times that of Africa. In 2050, the population of Africa will be three times that of Europe. One can accept and even welcome the prospect of this new world and still want to see the changes happen in a way that allows countries to adapt.

Give women freedom and support, and they will find reproductive equilibrium, so that when societies do shrink or grow, they do so in a manageable way. The lesson of these twin demographic dangers is clear: Take care of women, and they'll take care of the rest.

Real industry action on health reform?

By DREW ALTMAN
Special to The Washington Post

The writer is president and chief executive of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

The announcement that health-care industry groups plan to voluntarily shave $2 trillion off the rate of increase in health spending over the next 10 years reminded me of the voluntary effort launched with similar fanfare in the Carter administration. Then, industry groups fended off Jimmy Carter's efforts to aggressively control the costs of hospital care by offering to do it themselves. Their efforts helped slow the rate of increase in health spending for a few years—and helped defeat Carter's plan—but then the rate of increase in costs spiked again.

Historically, efforts to control growth in health costs have sometimes achieved successes, but higher rates of increases have always returned. Meanwhile, health costs continue to consume a bigger and bigger share of our economy.

Ever since the Carter presidency—during which I worked in what is now the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—the voluntary effort has been viewed in health policy circles as something of a farce—a president diverted by an industry trying to fend off cost-containment actions it views as more harmful to its bottom line. Today, though, the industry is at the table in an unprecedented way, and its efforts are not an attempt to block action on health reform legislation.

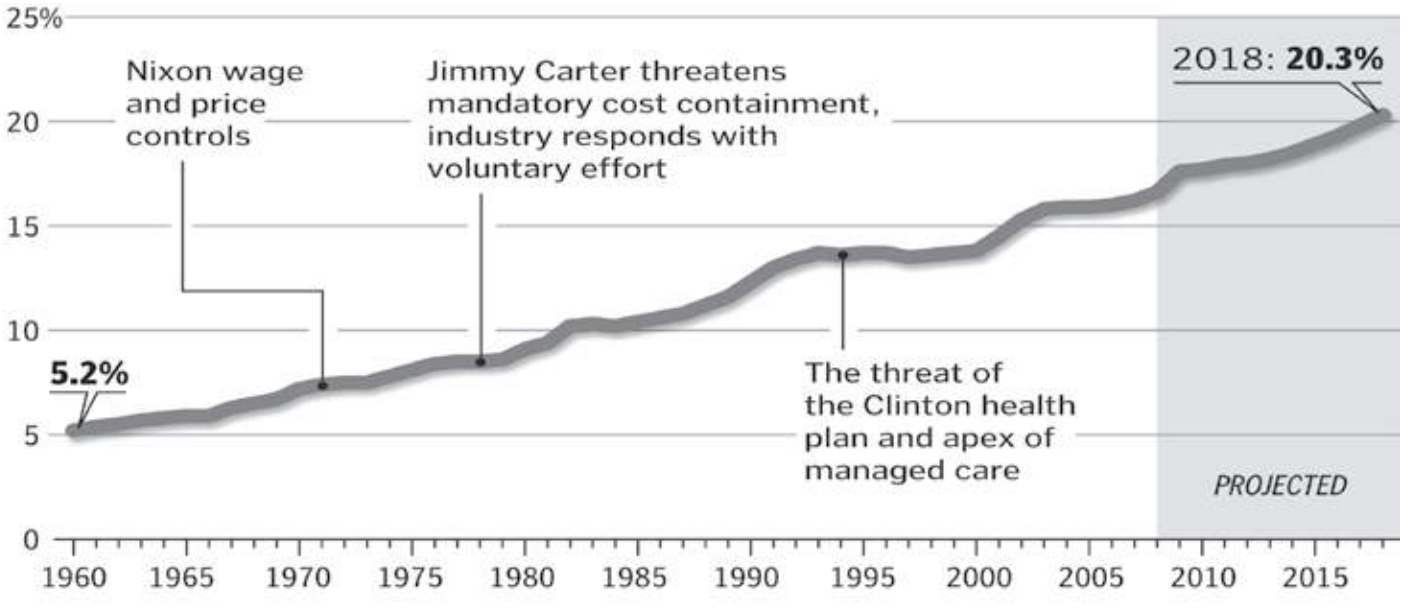
But this private effort—which President Obama has been clear is compatible with, but not a replacement for, Congress' challenge of designing and paying for health reform legislation—underscores how the prospect of broader action by a president and Congress, including specific ideas industry groups don't like, such as a public plan option, can motivate industry to do more than it otherwise would.

The good news is that the health-care industry has publicly recognized that the rate of growth in health spending is unsustainable and needs to be reduced (even if the announced goals do not prove fully achievable, either because national associations cannot deliver their members or expected savings do not materialize). Such recognition will provide cover for other efforts to reduce health spending. And it's possible that some of the ideas the industry groups propose, or similar ones, will emerge in health reform legislation on Capitol Hill.

The bigger test will come once health reform legislation is written and details about how it will be financed become clear. Will the industry remain supportive or will it revert to form and protect its bottom line? At that point, the debate will enter a critical phase—and if the industry is still at the table then, health care's legendary interest groups will really have changed their ways, and prospects for reform will be vastly improved.

Health Care Spending

National health expenditures as a share of gross domestic product



SOURCE: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services data via Kaiser Family Foundation

Letter to the Editor

Clarification

Your article on May 1, 2009 US Army Reserve to build training facility at Marpi range concerning the Army Reserve and its support to fund improvements on the Public Safety firing range requires some corrections. The Army Reserve is currently in dialogue with the director of public safety on having soldiers based on Saipan use the public safety firing range. Currently the discussions have articulated the requirements from the Army Reserve and there has been no discussion of funding for this initiative. The Army Reserve continues to discuss potential courses of action which can help both groups. As listed in your article there is continued discussion on the possible future expansion of the Army Reserve Center. We continue to work with the CNMI government and the Navy to build additional facilities for the unit in Saipan.

Col. Jon D. Lee
Chief of Staff
9th Mission Support Command

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°

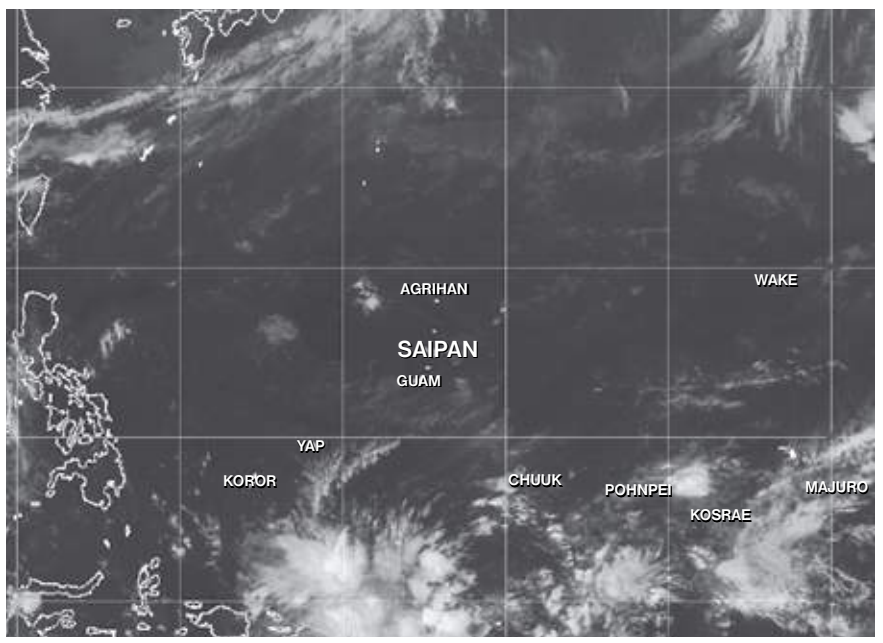
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲85	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲88	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲83	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼54
Beijing	Sunny	▲98	▼64
Hong Kong	Rain	▲80	▼76
Honolulu	Rain	▲83	▼69
London	Cloudy	▲70	▼48
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲74	▼60
Manila	Showers	▲88	▼77
Melbourne	Sunny	▲71	▼57
Miami	Thundershowers	▲86	▼73
New York	Thundershowers	▲79	▼62
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲73	▼58
Paris	Cloudy	▲72	▼58
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲75	▼64
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼61
Salem	Cloudy	▲69	▼42
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲64	▼51
Seoul	Rain	▲76	▼59
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲77	▼61
Washington, DC	Thundershowers	▲82	▼65

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An upper-level trough stretches southeastward from an upper-level circulation centered near 26N172E to 23N180. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found along and up to 100 miles northeast of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough runs from 4N130E eastward to 4N150E then turns southeastward to EQ155E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found between the equator and 6N from 136E to 146E. A surface trough extends from the equator at 156E to 9N161E. Scattered showers are found within 100 miles of this boundary. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southwest of Majuro and Kwajalein between the equator and 8N from 164E to 171E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
12:13 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
5:35 AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
12:51 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
7:48 PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:47 AM	6:41 PM
Sunday	5:46 AM	6:41 PM
Monday	5:46 AM	6:42 PM
Tuesday	5:46 AM	6:42 PM
Wednesday	5:46 AM	6:42 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:10 AM	5:24 PM
Sunday	5:02 AM	6:29 PM
Monday	6:01 AM	7:35 PM
Tuesday	7:05 AM	8:40 PM
Wednesday	8:12 AM	9:40 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 9, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

SAIPAN-GUAM

CO9317	4:30am	5:20am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1, 7
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	4, 5
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

CO9598	2:20am	2:50am	5, 6
CO9312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-PALAU (ROR)

CO893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3, 5
CO953	6:50pm	7:50pm	1, 7
CO953	7:35pm	10:05pm	2, 4, 6

PALAU (ROR)-MANILA

CO893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3, 5

GUAM-MANILA

CO893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via ROR
CO933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR111	6:00am	7:45am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW99	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW78	9:00am	2:05pm	Daily via NGO
NW75	3:50pm	6:25am	Daily

GUAM-NARITA (NRT)

CO961	6:35am	9:10am	Daily
NW83	8:00am	1:55pm	Daily via KIX
CO6	12:00pm	2:45pm	Daily
NW73	4:05pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO963	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	1
OZ119	4:20am	7:00am	4,6

GUAM-OSAKA (KIX)

NW83	8:00am	10:45am	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW78	9:00am	11:40am	Daily

GUAM-NAGOYA (NGO)

CO971	7:45am	10:30am	Daily
NW23	4:10pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO975	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	excl 1
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	1 via KIX
OZ119	4:20am	11:20am	4, 6 via KIX

SEOUL (ICN)-HONG KONG

OZ721	9:05am	11:45am	Daily
OZ723	7:45pm	10:30pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-MANILA

OZ701	8:35am	11:25am	Daily
OZ703	7:50pm	10:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

CO9598	3:25am	4:00am	5, 6
CO9312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

CO9316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
CO9598	2:20am	4:00am	5, 6 via ROP
CO9596	7:00am	5:00am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily x6
CO9312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	1, 4, 5, 7
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

CO9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1, 7

PALAU (ROR)-GUAM

CO954	1:10am	5:30am	3, 5, 7
CO954	1:45am	4:40am	1, 2
CO892	2:35am	5:30am	4, 6

MANILA-PALAU (ROR)

CO892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3, 5

MANILA-GUAM

CO892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3, 5 via ROR
CO934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR110	10:00pm	4:00am	1, 3, 5, 6, 7

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW76	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW77	6:30pm	1:40am+1	Daily via NGO
NW100	7:50pm	12:30am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-GUAM

NW74	10:00am	2:50pm	Daily
CO962	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
CO7	3:50pm	8:25pm	Daily
NW84	6:20pm	1:40am+1	Daily
CO964	8:25pm	1:00am+1	Daily
NW82	8:30pm	1:05am+1	4
NW82	8:30pm	1:20am+1	X 4

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:55pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6

OSAKA (KIX)-GUAM

NW84	9:05pm	1:40am+1	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW77	9:10pm	1:40am	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-GUAM

NW24	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
CO970	11:30am	4:30pm	Daily
CO972	8:25pm	12:55am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6 via KIX
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	excl 7

HONG KONG-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ724	12:30am	5:05am	Daily
OZ722	1:15pm	5:45pm	Daily

MANILA-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ702	12:45pm	5:45pm	Daily
OZ704	11:50pm	4:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

May 23, 2000

Illegal drugs seized
Surprise inspections conducted by a combined team from the Department of Public Health, Attorney General's Office and Department of Public Safety on five health clinics on Saipan revealed that some of these establishments were dispensing controlled substances and possessing medical devices illegally. This led to the arrest of one Chinese individual suspected of performing unlicensed medical procedure. The Chinese businessman was released pending the filing of appropriate charges. His acupuncture clinic was closed for operating without a sanitary health permit and a medical license. The inspection was carried out on May 10, 2000 to determine which acupuncture clinics are offering illegal medical procedures or non-FDA approved drugs.

Bank assets soar 10% in 1st Quarter
Amid hardships in all the other business activities in the Northern Marianas, the local finance sector continue to manifest resilience as bank assets soared 10 percent in the first three months of the year to $596.308 million from $544.429 million during the same period of last year. This translates to almost $52 million in additional bank assets in just a 12-month period, or an increase of more than $6 million since end-December 1999. A report obtained from the Banking and Insurance Division of the commerce department disclosed bank assets reached $589.9 million by end-1999. Commerce officials attribute the growth to the fact that banks gain much importance as the local economic environment becomes more volatile since they neutralize the magnitude of problems caused by hard economic times.

May 23, 2001

US Senate panel may back takeover
Commonwealth lobbyists in Washington DC have stepped up efforts to set roadblocks at the US House of Representatives following reports that well-placed federal officials and lawmakers have endorsed passage of the federal takeover bill. Lobbyists commissioned by the Commonwealth government, elevated the campaign to White House Legislative Affairs Office to mitigate the impact of endorsement letters received by S.507 author, Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski. The CNMI Legislature yesterday received reports that Mr. Murkowski gained enough votes at the US Senate Committee on Energy and Resources, which virtually paves the road for the submission for floor deliberation of S.507.

Four in fake dollar case plead guilty
Four more defendants to US dollar counterfeiting charges each pleaded guilty yesterday to the offense before the local and federal courts. The Superior and US District Courts ordered for defendants Nelie Baradi Florendo, Romeo Gumin Montoya, Thelma Loqueno Tejano and Ronalia De Guzman Navarro's immediate removal from the CNMI. Rolando Hilongo Lambid, who previously pled guilty to the charges at the federal court, also entered the same plea before the local court.

May 23, 2002

Other Bank of Saipan branches to open
Bank of Saipan will open its Tinian branch today and will start banking transactions on Rota tomorrow, according to the CNMI Department of Commerce. Whether the Garapan branch will open soon remains unknown, however. This developed even as Commerce Secretary Fermin Atalig disclosed that a meeting with court-appointed receiver Randall Fennel will be held today to discuss other issues surrounding the beleaguered banking institution. Besides the reopening of the bank's branches in Tinian and Rota, Atalig said today's meeting will also discuss possible resolution to clamor for the resumption of normal banking hours.

Court hearing on more BoS concerns set for May 29
The Superior Court is scheduled to hear on May 29 a slew of motions raised in the government's civil action against the Bank of Saipan, after Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan granted Monday requests by two parties seeking to orally argue their respective concerns at the soonest possible time. Originally, May 29 was calendared as the continuance of the BoS receivership hearing but Manibusan has allowed the respondent, Bank of Saipan, and the bank's largest government depositor, the Marianas Public Lands Authority, to present their specific issues before the court by granting their separate motions to shorten time. BoS is seeking to be heard on its motion to replace court-appointed temporary receiver Randall T. Fennell while the MPLA wants a chance to orally argue its motion to intervene in the government's pending suit against the BoS.

Business

GMAC gets $7.5B new aid

WASHINGTON (AP)—Auto lender GMAC Financial Services will receive $7.5 billion in additional government aid to keep loans flowing to would-be buyers of GM and Chrysler vehicles and shore up its capital postion—marking the second time the government has stepped in to prop up the lender.

To help GMAC raise additional funds, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. took the rare step Thursday of allowing the junk-rated company to gain access to its debt guarantee program. GMAC will be allowed to issue as much as $7.4 billion in debt, guaranteed by the FDIC in case the company defaults on payment.

In addition, the Federal Reserve waived rules to give GMAC's new bank, called Ally Bank, more leeway to make loans to GM customers.

Analysts suggest that the new government support will make GMAC a lending powerhouse that will give GM and Chrysler a huge advantage over their competitors—including U.S. rival Ford Motor Co., which hasn't taken any government aid. It would have the power to offer better loan terms to buyers of GM and Chrysler cars and trucks as a way of steering business to those automakers.

GMAC received $5 billion in December from the Treasury Department's $700 billion financial bailout program in exchange for 5 million common shares and the promise to extend financing to dealers of Chrysler LLC, which is restructuring under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil stays above $61 despite Fed comments

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices stayed above $61 a barrel Friday in Asia as traders brushed off a pessimistic U.S. central bank economic forecast to keep crude near six-month highs. Benchmark crude for July delivery was up 50 cents to $61.55 a barrel midday in Singapore in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Thursday, the contract fell 99 cents to settle at $61.05. The Federal Reserve sees "significant downside risks" for the U.S. economy, with the global financial system still "vulnerable to further shocks," according to minutes of a Fed meeting released this week.

Geithner: Wall Street rescue fund not permanent

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Treasury intends to use bank repayments of government aid to continue assisting the financial sector, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner told lawmakers Thursday even as he assured them that the $700 billion rescue fund would not become a permanent financial bailout tool. "We're still in a very challenging economic and financial situation," Geithner said. Republican lawmakers have argued that Geithner should use the repayments toward reducing the federal debt. But Geithner reminded members of a House Appropriations subcommittee Thursday that the rescue fund law, as adopted by Congress last fall, automatically ends on Dec. 31. The law gives the Treasury secretary the authority to extend it only nine more months. "So it is not a permanent program," he said.

Contractors: Blackwater supplied forbidden guns

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—The security firm formerly known as Blackwater armed some of its workers in Afghanistan despite U.S. military documents that prohibited them from carrying guns, said two former contractors who were fired after they were involved in a fatal shooting in the country. Justin Cannon and Steven McClain said Thursday that they frequently asked superiors why the company distributed the AK-47 assault rifles without Department of Defense authorization. "We were just told, 'Continue doing your job. Don't worry about it. That's above your paygrade,'" Cannon, 27, of Texas, said in an interview with The Associated Press. The men were involved in a shooting earlier this month that killed an Afghan and injured two others, and they recently returned to the U.S., saying they were cleared to leave after an interview with military investigators.

N.Korea allows limited Internet cell phone service

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea has begun limited Internet service for mobile phone users, a government Web site reported, months after launching an advanced network in cooperation with an Egyptian telecommunications company. The service allows North Koreans to access a Web site through their phones to see news reports carried by the country's official Korean Central News Agency as well as news about the capital Pyongyang, according to the government-run Uriminzokkiri Web site. The Korean-language Web site as seen on an ordinary computer screen also allows viewers to listen to North Korean music, get information about books, art and investment opportunities in North Korea and even engage in Internet chatting. It was unclear, however, if those services were available in the mobile version.

Nation

Obama backs Gitmo plan, Cheney defends Bush policy

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama fought Thursday to retake command of the emotional debate over closing Guantanamo, denouncing "fear-mongering" by political opponents and insisting that maximum-security prisons in the U.S. can safely house dangerous terror suspects transferred from Cuba. In a unique bit of Washington theater, former Vice President Dick Cheney delivered his own address just one minute later, defending the Bush administration's creation of the prison camp as vigorously as Obama denounced it.

Obama, appearing at the National Archives with its immensely symbolic backdrop of the nation's founding documents, said shutting down Guantanamo would "enlist our values" to make America safer. Speaking a day after an overwhelming congressional rebuke to his pledge to close the prison, he forcefully declared the camp a hindrance—not a help—to preventing future terrorist attacks. He contends that the prison, which has held hundreds of detainees for years without charges or trials, motivates U.S. enemies overseas.

The president promised to work with lawmakers to develop "an appropriate legal regime" for those who can't be tried and are too dangerous to be released. Still, he did not provide the level of detail about his plans that lawmakers, including Democrats, demanded in a 90-6 Senate vote denying money for the shutdown on Wednesday.

Cheney, in his own speech, denounced some of Obama's actions since taking office as "unwise in the extreme" and "recklessness cloaked in righteousness," repeating his contention from a series of headline-grabbing appearances recently that the new president is endangering the country by turning aside Bush-era policies. The former vice president, a primary architect of the Bush approach, accused Obama of looking for "a political strategy, not a national security strategy."

However, neither Cheney nor Obama brought significant new information to bear on the debate that has roiled Washington for weeks. Instead, each presented what amounted to lengthy—and dueling—summations of entrenched positions. Reaction afterward followed well-tilled ground as well, with no sign that Obama was winning the votes he will need to close the prison.

NM mom charged with killing son on the playground

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—A mother playing with her children at a park spotted a little black sneaker sticking out of the sand underneath the playground equipment. Figuring a youngster had lost his shoe, she bent down to pick it up. It was strangely heavy.

She had made a ghastly discovery: a dead little boy, buried in the sand.

For nearly a week, who the toddler was, how he died, and who put him there were a chilling mystery until Thursday, when a drawing of the youngster circulated by police led to the arrest of a young mother on murder charges.

Albuquerque police said Tiffany Toribio, 23, confessed to suffocating her 3-year-old son, Tyruss "Ty" Toribio, as he slept on the climbing gym—a crime so cold-blooded that neighbors struggled to comprehend it, and even veteran officers became choked up.

"For a mother to kill her own child is unfathomable. Most people can't even imagine how you could even think about doing something like that," said Cmdr. Michael Geier. "We'll never really understand why that happened, but we now understand the dynamics of what led up to that."

Toribio was homeless and sleeping in the park, having been kicked out of her mother's home and a friend's apartment in the days before her son's death because she was ignoring the boy and withholding affection, investigators said.

Senate passes $91.3 billion war funding bill

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate on Thursday passed a $91.3 billion military spending bill, shorn of money President Barack Obama wants to close the Guantanamo Bay prison but allowing him to significantly ramp up the U.S. war in Afghanistan.

The Senate voted 86-3 to pass the bill, which provides money for military and diplomatic operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, setting up House-Senate talks on a compromise measure to present to Obama next month.

The spending measure closely tracks Obama's request for war funds, although the $80 million he was seeking to close the U.S. naval prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, was dropped Wednesday.

A three-day Senate debate on the bill featured little of the angst over the situation in Afghanistan that permeated debate in the House last week on companion legislation.

Obama is sending more than 20,000 additional troops there and, for the first time next year, the annual cost of the war in Afghanistan is projected to exceed the cost of fighting in Iraq.

With support forces, the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan is expected to be about 68,000 by the end of the year—more than double the size of the U.S. force at the end of 2008.

Among the few cautionary voices was Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif.

"I want to give this administration ... the resources it needs to successfully end these wars," Boxer said. "I don't support an open-ended commitment of American troops to Afghanistan. And if we do not see measurable progress, we must reconsider our engagement and strategy there."

ACROSS THE NATION

Ex-soldier spared death sentence for Iraq murders

PADUCAH, Ky. (AP)—An ex-soldier convicted of raping and killing an Iraqi teen and murdering her family was spared the death penalty Thursday after jurors couldn't agree on a punishment for the brutal crime. Steven Dale Green, 24, of Midland, Texas, will instead serve a life sentence in a case that has drawn attention to the emotional and psychological strains on soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. In March 2006, after an afternoon of card playing, sex talk and drinking Iraqi whiskey, Pfc. Green and three other soldiers went to the home of 14-year-old Abeer Qassim al-Janabi near Mahmoudiya, about 20 miles south of Baghdad. Green shot and killed the teen's mother, father and sister, then became the third soldier to rape the girl before shooting her in the face. Her body was then set on fire.

NYC terror case latest of many homegrown plots

NEWBURGH, N.Y. (AP)—The four men were ex-convicts who envisioned themselves as holy warriors, ambitious enough to concoct a plot to blow up synagogues and military planes, authorities said. But they were amateurs every step of the way. They had trouble finding guns and bought cameras at Wal-Mart to photograph their targets. One was a convicted purse snatcher, another smoked marijuana the day the plot was to be carried out. Muslims fueled by hatred of America and Jews, they spent months scouting targets and securing what they thought was a surface-to-air missile system and powerful explosives—all under the watch of an FBI informant. The four were arrested late Wednesday outside a synagogue in the Bronx, following a long line of homegrown, headline-making terror plots since Sept. 11 that never came close to reality because the FBI inserted itself in the earliest stages.

Police: 4 arrests in Calif. frat hazing death

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif. (AP)—Four California college students face charges stemming from a fraternity hazing that caused the alcohol-induced death of a university freshman, authorities said Thursday. Carson Starkey, 18, of Austin, Texas, was found dead in December with a blood-alcohol level between 0.39 percent and 0.44 percent. He had to drink a bag full of alcoholic drinks as part of the fraternity pledging process at the California Polytechnic State University, police said. "Carson's death was the result of a crime and it was entirely preventable," police Chief Deborah Linden said.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REVISED

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, May 27, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. in the CPA Conference Room, Second Floor, Captain George F. Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan, Saipan.

The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (April 30, 2009)

II. SPECIAL AGENDA ITEMS
1. ARFF Program Expansion
2. Maintenance Service Contract for Baggage Handling System (Vanderlande)
3. Revenue comparison 2008 to 2009 for Airport and Seaport
4. Accounts Receivables from Board and Staff
5. Personnel Matter: Contract Renewals
6. Proposed Organizational Charts
7. Independent Contracts
8. Acceptance of the Audit
9. Office of the Public Auditor (OPA) Audit Information
10. Procurement Matter: Request to increase Small Purchase Limit
11. Request to reprogram funds for emergency repairs/maintenance

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/S/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director
May 22, 2009

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Eloy S. Inos through the Coastal Resources Management Office (CRMO) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 26, 2009, at 1:30 P.M. at the CRMO conference room, 1st floor Morgen Building, Oleai, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
Call to Order
Roll Call

II. PROPOSED PROJECT
Asphalt Batching Plant – Air Quality Emissions:
DEQ Permit Application
a. Permit application
b. Discussion by CRM Agencies
c. Application Status (CRMO/CRM Agencies)

III. OTHER MATTERS
Marpi Clearing activity to remove Unexploded Ordinances (UXO Removal): Department of Public Lands

IV. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board [CRM Agency Officials] may vote to meet in executive session.)

JOHN B. JOYNER, Ph.D.
Director

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 5:30 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Bldg., Saipan

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
5. Communications

B. Reports
1. Chairman
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Administrator
5. Committees
6. Legal Counsel

C. Permits/ Applications and related actions: review and decide
1. Conditional Use 2008-1497 Big Boy Marine Sports, Inc.

D. Old Business
1. None

E. New Business
1. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment

F. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with Legal Counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters

G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman

World

War's end: Sri Lankans relieved but Tamils worried

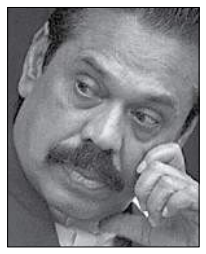
COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The ice cream man went to work with dread every day at Colombo's main rail station, a prime target for suicide bombers who once killed several teenage baseball players on a platform in front of his stand.

With the defeat of the Tamil Tigers, the vendor and many other Sri Lankans say they no longer live in terror of the next blast—a welcome change after more than two decades of suicide attacks by the rebels.

"People can travel freely, without fear," said Jayakodiarachcige Jayaweera, the ice cream man.

But security remains tight amid fears the rebels are not completely gone.

Political veterans caution that without a settlement for the minority Tamils, the respite may be brief. And Tamils fear the end of the rebellion may remove any incentive for the government to satisfy their grievances.


Rajapaksa

Jayaweera remains haunted by the sight and smell of the 15 victims killed when a suicide bomber blew herself up as she disembarked at the Fort station in February 2008. Nearly 100 others were wounded. Platform 3 was awash in gore and blood.

The teenaged baseball players had just returned from a weekend tournament in the city of Kandy. The nation was preparing to celebrate 60 years of independence from British rule and the city was tense after two recent bus bombings killed 32 people. The rebels appeared unstoppable, capable of striking at will in the national heartland.

"It was a horrible scene. You never forget that," Jayaweera said.

"You can't explain the fear," he said. "It's terrible."

The Tamil Tiger separatists, who ran a shadow state in the north for years, have been blamed for more than 250 suicide attacks since a rebel known as Capt. Miller drove a truckload of explosives into an army camp on July 5, 1987, killing himself and 40 soldiers.

Photographs this week of rebel chief Velupillai Prabhakaran's fatigues-clad body in the battlefield brought palpable comfort to Colombo, a city whose 800,000 residents grew accustomed to security blockades, an ever-present force of armed soldiers on the streets and constant wariness about concealed bombs.

"I feel a great relief after hearing of Prabhakaran's death," said Nimal Seneviratne, 42, a port worker who makes a two-hour commute daily by train. "Everyday when I would leave home in the morning I would feel sad for my children, because I was not sure whether I would see them again."

The army said security will remain tight and troops would continue sweeping the jungles to flush out remaining rebels. The military said it killed eight insurgents Thursday in a battle outside the eastern city of Trincomalee.

"There is no relaxation of the security," said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara. "We will continue with the same security level until such time we are confident that there are no remaining terrorists."

Indonesia air force in the spotlight after plane crash

MAGETAN, Indonesia (AP)—Investigators sifted through the charred wreckage of an Indonesian military plane Friday to determine what caused a crash that killed 100 people. The defense minister said all C-130 Hercules would be grounded if mechanical problems were to blame.

It was the third accident involving a military aircraft in just two months and followed complaints that the air force was struggling to maintain its aging fleet and hold on to experienced pilots.

The plane that plummeted to the ground Wednesday—slamming into several houses and then skidding into a rice field, where it burst into flames—was almost three decades old.

But military spokesman Sagom Tamboen insisted it was in good condition, passing both a maintenance and flight check earlier this week. Others noted that skies were clear and that while pilots were communicating with air traffic control, they gave no indication they were having problems.

"We're still investigating," said Tamboen, as teams cut through the twisted, metal fuselage.

There were 112 people on the C-130, which was carrying troops and their families from the capital, Jakarta, to Indonesia's easternmost province of Papua, home to a decades-long insurgency.

It was making several stops along the way and was attempting to land at an air force base in East Java province when it crashed.

Bambang Samoedra, commander of the base, said at least 100 people were killed, including two villagers on the ground. Fifteen others were injured, many with severe burns.

Indonesia's air force, long underfunded and handicapped by a recently lifted U.S. ban on weapons sales, has suffered a string of plane crashes.

Twenty-four people were killed last month when a Fokker 27 crashed into an airport hangar during a training mission. And just last week another C-130 lost its landing gear and slammed into a house, injuring four people.

UN seeks $543M for Pakistan war refugees

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The United Nations appealed Friday for $543 million to ease the "incredible suffering" of nearly 2 million refugees from Pakistan's war against Taliban militants.

The world body said the money was urgently needed to fund some 165 projects drawn up by U.N. agencies and aid groups to assist civilians fleeing the conflict centered on the northwestern Swat Valley.

"The scale of this displacement is extraordinary in terms of size and speed and has caused incredible suffering," Martin Mogwanja, the acting U.N. humanitarian coordinator in Pakistan, said in a statement.

"We are calling for generous support from the international community," he said.

An estimated 1.9 million people have fled the fighting in Swat and two neighboring districts since the army launched an offensive last month to halt a Taliban advance toward the capital, Islamabad. More than 160,000 are staying in sweltering camps just south of the battle zone; the rest have been taken in by relatives.

The government said Thursday that foreign donors had already pledged $224 million to help the displaced. Pakistan, which is heavily dependent on foreign aid, has pledged $100 million of its own. It was unclear if those funds would count toward the total sought by the U.N.

Donors are rushing to help the displaced in part to protect the pro-Western government from the political fallout of a military operation begun under strong U.S. pressure.

The Obama administration has declared eliminating militant havens in Pakistan vital to its goals of defeating al-Qaida and winning the war in Afghanistan.

But an army failure or a botched relief effort in Swat would further undermine Pakistani enthusiasm for tough military action inside its own borders.

"There is an urgent need for a joint and comprehensive response to this issue by all those who are committed to fighting terrorism," Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said at a donors' conference on Thursday. "Without peace there can be no sustainable development and without development the establishment of enduring peace is impossible."

WORLD BRIEFS

3 US soldiers, dozens of Iraqis killed by bombings

BAGHDAD (AP)—Bombers struck in Baghdad and a northern city Thursday, killing three American soldiers and nearly two dozen Iraqis in a new spasm of violence that has taken at least 66 lives in two days. A spate of attacks since April seems aimed at stoking sectarian tension and undermining public confidence only weeks before U.S. combat troops are due to leave Baghdad and other cities, handing security responsibility to Iraq's security forces. Although recent violence has not risen to levels of two years ago, it has fueled public unease over whether Iraq's army and police can maintain the security gains since the 2007 U.S. troop surge.

Myanmar: Suu Kyi visitor was anti-government plot

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's junta alleged Friday that anti-government forces engineered an American's illegal visit to the house of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi to embarrass the government and aggravate its relations with the West. Authorities detained John W. Yettaw after he left Suu Kyi's heavily guarded compound earlier this month and charged the Nobel peace laureate with violating terms of her house arrest by allowing the American to stay at her home without official permission. The offense is punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. Her trial began Monday.

Malawi president wins re-election

BLANTYRE, Malawi (AP)—Malawi's President Bingu wa Mutharika, a former World Bank official credited with bringing economic gains to the southern African nation of 12 million, on Friday was declared the winner of a national election. With 93.25 percent of the votes counted, Electoral Commission chairwoman and Supreme Court judge Anastansia Msosa declared the winner at 1 a.m. Friday (2300 GMT Thursday). Malawians went to the polls Tuesday to chose between re-electing Mutharika or replacing him with a candidate backed by his predecessor—the latest round in a five-year feud that has triggered rioting, an impeachment effort and parliamentary paralysis.

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PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, May 23, 2009

NMC-CREES visits major research centers in RP

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Officials and staff of the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services just came from a 13-day trip to agricultural research centers in the Philippines, including a visit to the Herbal Pharmaceutical Processing and Manufacturing Plant in Tacloban City, Leyte.

The visits, held April 19-31,were funded by a Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Professional Development Program Grant called Technology Transfer of Alternative Plant Medicines for Livestock Health Care in the Western Pacific.

Coordinating the trip was Dr. Allan Sabaldica of NMC-CREES.

The participants included agricultural consultant Isidoro Cabrera, director Ross Manglona, Dr. Dilip Nandwani, Manases Barcinas, Lawrence Dupanchel, Joaquin Deleon Geurrero, and representatives from Guam, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Seven others from Tinian were part of the trip: Winnie Matsumoto, Steve Cabrera, Manny Cruz Jr., Ben Cabrera, Joe Cruz, James Manglona and David Evanglista.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The delegation poses with Tacloban City Mayor Alfred S. Romualdez during a visit to the Philippine province of Leyte.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The group poses for a group picture after a visit to the Herbal Pharmaceutical Processing and Manufacturing Plant in Tacloban City, Leyte.

The group had a chance to visit the sprawling campus of the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, Laguna, where the International Rice Research Institute is located.

They also visited other major facilities, including the Bureau of Plant Industry, Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems, UP Botanical Garden, UP Manila Institute of Herbal Medicine, and National Museum Botanical Division.

The group attended a lecture on modern practice of herbal medicine, community-based herbal medicine preparation at the Ateneo Botanical Garden and at the St. Luke's Medical Center Research and Biotechnology Division.

In Tacloban City, they attended a lecture on herbal medicine propagation, harvest, storage and processing.

The group also met with Tacloban City Mayor Alfred S. Romualdez and other city government officials. Leyte is the birthplace of former Philippine first lady Imelda R. Marcos and Romualdez is her nephew.

Cabrera said these visits were beneficial to the CNMI because it gave additional knowledge to the herbal medicinal plants that are available in the CNMI.

"The Philippines is more advanced in these aspect. They are already manufacturing the herbal medicines for commercial purposes," he said.

Economy grew by 1.8-2.8 percent in Q1

By RONNEL DOMINGO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The economy likely grew between 1.8 and 2.8 percent in the first three months of the year—the worst quarter of 2009, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

Neda director general Ralph G. Recto said in a briefing the country's gross domestic product was buoyed by continuous growth in three major sectors—services, agriculture and industry.

GDP is the total value of goods and services produced and paid for within an economy in a given period.

"In services, the government and private sectors combined for a possible overall growth of between 3 percent and 4 percent," Recto said.

The former senator noted that government expenditures jumped 16.4 percent in the first three months due to spending to stimulate growth.

"Large investments in agriculture may have resulted in a growth rate of between 1.5 percent and 2.1 percent for the sector," Recto said.

On the other hand, he said, the drop in exports due to dampened global demand meant slow growth in industry, particularly manufacturing, which could fall between 0.1 percent and 1.5 percent.

Earlier this month, the National Statistics Office reported that export earnings for the first quarter declined by 36.8 percent to $7.921 billion from the $12.543 billion seen in the same period of 2008.

As of March, export earnings have been falling for six consecutive months. The worst figure was seen in December, when earnings suffered a 40.3-percent year-on-year decline.

"What is important is that industry continued to show positive numbers," Recto said.

The Neda chief said that based on available data from neighboring countries, the Philippines fared better than more advanced economies like Singapore and South Korea, which contracted by 10.1 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively.

"We expect better performance in the second quarter and in the remaining half of the year," Recto said. "We believe the first quarter will prove to be the weakest this year."

But he was quick to say that faster growth in the subsequent quarters would not necessarily mean a recovery.

It could only indicate that "the worst may be over," he added.

"Recovery may take longer, so we have to focus on the domestic economy," Recto said. "We may be better off concentrating on trade with our neighbors in the region."

Still, Malacañang's chief economist said the government was keeping its projection that GDP would grow within 3.1 percent and 4.1 percent in 2009.

"This can be achieved provided that, as forecast, remittances from overseas Filipinos continue to grow, exports would rebound along with the pick up of global demand, overnight bank lending and borrowing rates would keep easing, and inflation would keep going down," Recto said.

Doomed Filipino worker spared in Kuwait

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—A Filipino worker accused of killing another Filipino in Kuwait has been spared from the death penalty after the granting of a "tanazul," an affidavit of forgiveness executed by the legal heirs of the victim or the victim himself.

The DFA, which facilitated the granting of the "tanazul," said the document is required by the Kuwait Court of Cassation to save the life of Bienvenido Espino, who was accused of killing Jhiyas Gumapac in 2007.

The procedure is in accordance with Sharia law and the Islamic sense of forgiveness and value of the individual's life, it added in a statement issued Wednesday.

Joel S. Gumapac, the victim's father, was quoted as saying that persistent representations made by the DFA's Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs and Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Ricardo Endaya, and a series of consultations with his family led to their decision to forgive Espino.

In cases of death or injury to a victim, a Sharia court hears the case on two aspects—the private and the public.

LABOR FRONT

Proposed changes to Labor rules and regulations

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: Under the Department of Labor's proposed amendments to the employment rules and regulations, who will grant an alien worker's request for extension of time to find a new employer?

A: Under the Labor's current rules and regulations, it is the Labor director's job. But under the Labor's proposed amendments, extensions of time within which to locate an employer may be granted by the Labor Administrative Hearing Office. The administrative hearing office can do so when the application is submitted within 10 days after expiration of the initial period of time within which to locate an employer and assumption of full responsibility by the alien worker for medical and other expenses.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: Under the Labor's proposed amendments, what are the limitations on new hires of alien workers?

A: With respect to on-island hires, the proposed amendments stateS that an employer who has laid off citizens, permanent residents, or foreign national workers shall be barred for a period of 90 days from the effective date of termination from hiring any new foreign national workers to work in the job classifications previously held by the laid-off workers.

On off-island hires, the proposed regulations state that an employer who has laid off citizens, permanent residents, or foreign national workers shall be barred for a period of six months following the effective date of termination from hiring alien workers from off-island to work in the job classifications held by laid-off workers.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: What will happen to the controversial periodic exit requirements for alien workers under the proposed amendments?

A: According to Labor, under the proposed changes the requirements of the periodic exit have been suspended until further publication of regulations. Labor says there is a need for the suspension in order to promote recovery from severely adverse economic conditions; to accommodate the uncertainties with respect to implementation of Public Law 11-0229 (federalization law); to minimize costs imposed on businesses; and to allow Labor to function efficiently under a substantially reduced budget.

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First H1N1 flu case confirmed in the Philippines

By DONA PAZZIBUGAN, ANNA VALMERO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Take the health warnings seriously—it's here.

Health Secretary Dr. Francisco Duque III Thursday night confirmed the first case of Influenza A(H1N1) infection in the country—in a 10-year-old Filipino girl who arrived from the United States with her parents on May 18.

"The DoH confirms today the first case of AH1N1 in the Philippines. She is a female traveler who arrived in the country on May 18 from the United States, whose throat specimen tested positive based on results from the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine," Duque said.

Duque, who is in Geneva, Switzerland, attending a World Health Organization meeting, held a video conference with reporters at the WHO regional office in Manila to break the news Thursday night.

"I talked with the president and from the tone of her voice she was very concerned. In fact, she gave me the go signal to conduct this press conference," Duque added.

AP

Health Undersecretary Dr. Mario Villaverde, right, gestures as he answers media queries as World Health Organization Country Representative Dr. Soe Nyunt-U listens during a press conference Thursday, May 21, 2009 in Manila, Philippines.

Dr. Eric Tayag of the Department of Health's National Epidemiology Center said the girl, who was not identified, had also been to Canada.

The girl, he said, developed a fever, cough and sore throat on May 19, the day after arriving, and was brought to the RITM in Muntinlupa City where the diagnosis was confirmed Thursday.

Despite the index case, Duque said: "There is no community outbreak in the country, measures are being done to prevent transmission, including quarantine of immediate household of the first case. The first case is something we have been preparing for as a result of public and private sectors' effective surveillance system."

Health Undersecretary Mario Villaverde said the test results came Thursday afternoon from RITM and the patient was immediately given antiviral Oseltamivir.

The first case no longer had fever and cough but still has sore throat, said Villaverde.

Tayag said specimens from the index case will be sent to a WHO collaborating center in Melbourne as routine procedure for all specimens that will test positive for the novel AH1N1.

"The child developed the symptoms a day after arrival, so this is also a call for vigilance on the part of the public that people in the country and incoming travelers from abroad, especially from infected areas, submit themselves to quarantine screening and continuous monitoring of health, especially body temperature for 10 days, and to report to the DoH any flu-like symptoms," said Villaverde.

Villaverde reiterated that the public should observe proper hygiene, strengthen resistance and do social distancing—avoid going to crowded areas if the need is not urgent.

Since there is only a single confirmed case, Villaverde said, there is no need to postpone the opening of schools in June.

Up till then the country had been flu-free despite the disease afflicting citizens of nearby countries like Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan.

In Geneva, a month after the world was alerted to a potential influenza pandemic, doubts fostered by the mild symptoms of the new swine flu virus have prompted the WHO to think twice about sounding the maximum alarm despite the spread of infection in 41 countries.

The WHO on Thursday raised its tally of swine flu cases around the world to 11,034 and 85 deaths. Most of the 791 new cases have been reported in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Mexico confirmed three more deaths linked to the A(H1N1) virus, while the United States confirmed two additional deaths since Wednesday's tally.

'Imminent pandemic'

At least 38 other countries in the Americas, Asia and Europe have reported cases since the outbreak in Mexico, but the world remains at flu alert level five, signaling an "imminent pandemic."

WHO Director General Margaret Chan is hesitant about declaring a fully fledged pandemic by moving to Phase 6, even though travelers have carried the virus to other continents.

The maximum alert level would indicate sustained community transmission in a second region outside the Americas.

Actor Richard Gutierrez hurt in car accident

By ABIGAIL KWOK
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Actor Richard Gutierrez and a companion were injured early Friday in a car accident that also killed another in Cavite province, authorities said.

Chief Superintendent Perfecto Palad, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon) regional police chief, said the incident occurred at around 1:30 a.m. along the northbound lane of the Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay Road in Barangay (village) Putting-Kahoy in Silang town.

Gutierrez, who was driving his Nissan GTR sports car, was managing a curve when he lost control of the vehicle and crossed over to the opposite lane, hitting a lamp post, said Superintendent Danilo Buentipo, Silang town police chief, in a separate interview.

Buentipo said the impact toppled the lamp post.

Gutierrez, his assistant Nomar Pardo, and Jorce Mascora, were rushed to a hospital in Tagaytay where Pardo died.

Meanwhile, in a phone patch interview by GMA Network's "Unang Hirit" with Gutierrez's publicist Jun Lalin, he said the actor underwent surgery.

Lalin said Gutierrez's parents, Annabelle Rama and Eddie Gutierrez, and sister Ruffa were now with the actor.

Buentipo said that at 4 a.m., Gutierrez was transferred to the Asian Hospital in Muntinlupa City.

He said that the incident was "purely an accident," describing the area as "accident-prone" because it was poorly lit.

"We also received information that Gutierrez just came back from a shoot. He must be tired," Buentipo added.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

ComVal landslide death toll hits 27

PANTUKAN, MINDANAO—The death toll from the devastating landslide that hit three mining villages in the province of Compostela Valley last Monday has reached 27, civil defense authorities said Wednesday. Some gold miners used their hands to dig out the bodies of their colleagues buried under a pile of mud and rocks after landslides tumbled down a rain-soaked mountain. About 50 miners took shelter from pounding rain in five bunkhouses when the mudslides swept away the shanties. Most of the dead were pinned and crushed by rocks and suffocated under a meter of mud, said rescuer Albert Dayao. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

NBI: Failon's wife killed herself

MANILA, Philippines—After a month-long inquiry into the shooting death of Trinidad "Trina" Etong, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) confirmed what its agents have been saying all along: The wife of ABS-CBN star broadcaster Ted Failon committed suicide. NBI Director Nestor Mantaring announced at a news conference Thursday that a major depressive disorder caused by massive financial losses drove Etong to put a gun to her head on April 15 in her Tierra Pura house in Quezon City. She died in the hospital the following day. Mantaring skated around questions on the amount of money involved or details of the financial losses or how they were incurred, citing purported bank secrecy laws. He said that the NBI came to the conclusion that Etong "indeed committed suicide" after a "careful perusal of the testimonial evidence and conscientious evaluation." ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

Arroyo slips into fast-food joint in Makati

MANILA, Philippines—Away from the glare of news cameras, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Thursday quietly slipped into a fast-food restaurant at the Makati Central Business District, and ordered a value meal breakfast before chatting with call center agents. Arroyo motored to the McDonald's branch at the Paseo Center on Paseo de Roxas Avenue in Makati City and ordered a meal of longganisa (local sausage) before joining a gaggle of call center agents at a table at around 6:30 a.m. She chatted with more than a dozen call center pioneers from companies like People Support, Convergys, DSM Manila and E-Telecare, according to RTVM (Radio Television Malacañang). Ms Arroyo's unexpected sortie into McDonald's was not open to media but RTVM has a video footage of it. It was not known if Ms Arroyo left any tip. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

11 saved from drowning in van accident

KIDAPAWAN CITY, North Cotabato—Eleven persons, including an eight year-old girl, almost drowned but were safely plucked out of a creek here on Thursday, after the van they were riding in turned turtle from the national highway in Barangay (Village) Amas, a traffic officer said. Senior Police Officer 2 Reymundo Lam-an, traffic division chief of the city police, said the van, being driven by Wilfredo Abiar, was cruising the highway around 2 p.m. when a still unidentified man stoned it. The stone hit the van's windshield, leaving the driver without visibility, he said.

Lam-an said the van's passengers sustained varying degrees of injuries when it plunged into the creek. "Fortunately, the 505th rescue team from Kidapawan City quickly arrived in the area and pulled out all passengers trapped inside the van, which was slowly going under the water," he said. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

Violence erupts again over land in Boracay

ILOILO CITY, Philippines—Disputes over prized lots on Boracay Island erupted into violence anew on Tuesday after security guards of a property developer opened fire on two employees of a property claimant. Workers Danny Cordero and Rico Marbede suffered wounds in their legs after security guards of the Winace Holdings Philippines Inc. allegedly shot them as they built a fence near a disputed lot in Barangay Balabag, according to a report of the Boracay Special Tourist Police Office. The workers, both employees of property claimant Ruth Tirol, were setting up the fence when they were fired at by security guards Ponciano Tayco Jr. and Florencio Zabala, the BSTPO reported. The guards belong to the Winace Holdings Philippines Inc., developer of the One White Beach Resort. The victims were brought to the Boracay Municipal Hospital for treatment. ***(Inquirer Visayas)***

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BRUCE L. MAILMAN is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and has provided immigration services in the CNMI since 1989

MAYA B. KARA is a former CNMI Acting Attorney General, Chief Legislative Counsel, Governor's and Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel and DOL Hearing Officer

Manny Villar to go on trial for C-5 road diversion

By MICHAEL LIM UBAC, CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The vote was unanimous.

The Senate acting as a committee of the whole Thursday said there was a "prima facie case" to support the charge of ethical violations filed against Sen. Manuel Villar in connection with the purported double funding and diversion of the C-5 road extension project.

All 12 senators at the hearing, including the presiding officer, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, voted in the affirmative, thus authorizing the committee to go on to the next step—the public trial or adjudicatory hearings.

Villar and the other five members of the minority did not attend the hearing, having earlier decried the purported one-sided nature of the proceedings.

Enrile said Villar could not be compelled to attend the yet to be scheduled trial.

The original ethics rules would have compelled Villar to attend the trial under pain of being cited for contempt, Enrile said.

"But that was removed from the rules at the behest of the minority members," he said.

'Ganging up on me'

At a press conference held hours after the voting, Villar told reporters he was not surprised by the majority bloc's decision.

"I did tell you earlier that I was willing to bet I would be adjudged guilty," he told reporters in Filipino.

Villar, one of the senators aspiring for the presidency, said he was saddened just the same. "But that's life. They ganged up on us," he added.

On Monday, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel predicted that Villar would be "hanged" by the majority.

In a text message following Thursday's voting, Pimentel said: "The known world condemned Galileo centuries ago when he said that the world was spherical. The world was wrong then. The Senate committee of the whole is full of holes [and] is also wrong today despite a majority vote."

Pretrial ordered

Enrile ordered the holding of a preliminary conference among the concerned parties right after the committee of the whole voted to adopt the resolution read by general counsel Johnmuel Mendoza finding "credible, substantial evidence" to warrant a public trial.

He directed the general counsel, special counsel and secretariat of the committee to meet "between now and Monday" behind closed doors to tackle pertinent issues.

A report on the result of the preliminary conference, which is akin to a pretrial in criminal proceedings, is expected to be submitted to the committee at a hearing set on Tuesday.

In the eight-page resolution, the committee noted that despite being informed on May 11 of the scheduled preliminary inquiry on May 14, Villar "neither appeared … nor responded to the charges against him."

It said Sen. Jamby Madrigal had provided documentary evidence in support of the charge against Villar, "and without any responsive pleading or controverting evidence from the respondent, it appears that there is substantial credible evidence to support" the allegations against him.

DISAPPEARING OYSTERS AP

In this March 4, 2009 file photo, a Filipino worker pours out shellfish, which earns him around 40 pesos (less than US $1) per sack he cleans and sorts, at a market in Manila, Philippines. Overfishing and unchecked coastal development have resulted in the disappearance of 85 percent of all oyster reefs, making this ecosystem one of the most severely effected marine habitats in the world, according to a study released Thursday May 21, 2009.

Filipinos who aided Jews to be honored in Israel

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—More than 1,000 Jews fleeing persecution in Nazi Germany found refuge in the faraway Philippines, thanks to the government's "open doors" policy that Israel plans to honor with a monument next month, officials said Friday.

The modern structure of three steel doors, frames and marble floor tiles commemorates the "courage, hospitality and the determination" of the Philippines to give humanitarian support for European Jews seeking refuge from the Holocaust, the Israeli Embassy said in a statement on its Web site.

"The warm hospitality of the Filipino people undoubtedly shed light to one of the darkest and most difficult periods in Jewish history," the embassy said.

The "Open Doors" monument, designed by Filipino artist Jun Yee, is scheduled to be unveiled June 21 at the Rishon Lezion Holocaust Park in central Israel.

The idea came from Holocaust survivor Frank Ephraim's book "Escape to Manila," published in 2003. It details the author's and 35 other Jewish refugees' journey to the Philippines—then a U.S. commonwealth—just before it fell to the Japanese during the mayhem of World War II that left the capital, Manila, in ruins.

The Berlin-born Ephraim and his parents fled to the Philippines in 1939, when he was 8, taking advantage of President Manuel Quezon's decision to welcome Jewish refugees.

Preparations were made to accept 10,000 Jews a year, but only 1,200 made it to Manila.

Alec Baldwin apologizes for slur

MANILA, Philippines—Hollywood actor Alec Baldwin on Thursday apologized to the Philippines and the Filipino people for making a quip on the David Letterman show that he was thinking of getting a mail-order bride from the Philippines to achieve his goal of having more children.

In a statement he posted on his blog (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alec-baldwin/an-apology-regarding-my-l_b_205766.htm), Baldwin, 51, asked to be forgiven for making the offensive joke which he attributed to his "advanced" age.

He said the anger that his remarks provoked in the Philippines was "understandable."

"I believe that most people understood that this was a joke and took it as such. (A dated reference, no doubt, and another sign of my advancing age.) However, I do apologize to anyone who took offense," he said.

"The comments of some Philippine government officials come as no surprise to me, either. Even the one by a former action film star-turned-senator who beckoned me to come to the Philippines so he could 'beat' me over my comment," he said, referring to Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. who denounced the American actor on Monday.

Baldwin said that such anger and frustration about the issue of sex trafficking in the Philippines was not misplaced as the country had suffered significant problems with the issue.

He also cited the work of an organization called Love146, headed by Rob Morris, which combats human trafficking and child sex slavery and exploitation in various regions of the world.

He said his brother Stephen had "educated" him on the work of Love146 and on the issue of human trafficking.

"I had met with Rob in New York some months before the Letterman appearance, in the hopes of helping him raise money for this group. Again, I apologize for the perceived insensitivity of that remark and ask you to visit the Love146 site," he said.

Delivered in jest

In a May 12 interview on "The Late Show" with David Letterman, Baldwin said that he would love to have more children.

"I think about getting a Filipino mail-order bride at this point or a Russian one, I don't care, I'm 51," the award-winning actor said.

Although it was delivered in jest, Baldwin's remark caused the audience to break into laughter and prompted Letterman, to respond: "Get one for me [also], for later."

Baldwin has been involved in a bitter dispute with his ex-wife, actress Kim Basinger, for custody of their 13-year-old daughter, Ireland.

The Department of Foreign Affairs did not find the joke funny and immediately wrote Baldwin to convey its displeasure.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Is borrowing money from kin a good option?

INQUIRER.net

Q: My boyfriend and I are planning to put up a small business—a waffle stand—in a school canteen. We're a little short of cash, so my best move I think is to borrow money from my father. How can I assure him that I would be able to pay the debt? –Lisa

A: When a financial need arises and one's assets are not enough to meet that need, a lot of Filipinos consider borrowing from one's immediate family or from other relatives. After all, when loans are made between relatives, interest may not be charged to help the person in need with his financial burden.

Although this may look good at first glance, getting loans from relatives may not be a good practice. In fact, this may even result in more problems both on the part of the person taking out the loan and the person granting it.

For one, your relationship may be at stake. Because the loan is made with a relative, one may take his time in paying up, especially if times are hard. This may result in resentment on the part of the person granting the loan, and shame on the part of the person borrowing money, thus straining the familial relationship.

What's more, since the loan is between relatives, it may be unthinkable to ask for collateral. "Trust" is enough. But when the borrower can no longer pay the loan, the one who gave money may be put in a difficult situation, especially if he is nearing retirement age.

Borrowing tips

To avoid these problems, why not determine first if you borrow elsewhere: from the bank, a lending cooperative, or from government corporations granting loans, such as the SSS or GSIS? If payment terms seem reasonable, consider this rather than borrowing from relatives.

However, if you are not qualified to get any loan from outside sources, you may borrow from a relative. Make sure, though, to follow these tips to avoid future problems:

■ Offer to pay interest at prevailing market rates if possible.

■ Put the loan agreement in writing. Agree on the terms, including the payment period. Treat the transaction in a professional manner and your relative will hold you in higher respect.

■ Offer collateral. Some jewelry or artwork can be used as guarantee that you will pay off the loan.

■ Pay on time. Just like you would pay off a bank loan religiously, try your best to pay off your loan from your relative promptly.

■ If you can, pay up even earlier. If business performs well such that you recoup your investment earlier, settle your loan earlier as well.

■ If you are hard up, negotiate for better terms. Seek an appointment with your relative, explain to him your predicament, and ask for more liberal terms, such as a longer paying period and lower installment payments. Make sure this new agreement is put in writing. If need be, offer additional collateral.

■ Keep your copy of the loan agreement in a safe place. Make sure your family knows where it can be found.

■ From time to time, update your relative on how the loan is helping you in your business. Show him your place of business. This will assure him that the loan proceeds are being used responsibly.

And when you have fully paid off the loan, make sure to celebrate. Take out your relative to lunch or dinner to show him how much you appreciate his help during your time of need.

Taking a loan is serious business, whether made with banks, financial institutions, or with relatives. Always do your end of the deal.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

NBI subpoenas Kho, Belo; 'doc has 40 sex videos'

By JEANNETTE ANDRADE, TINA SANTOS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Subpoenas have been issued to three people, including celebrity cosmetic surgeon Vicki Belo and her ex-boyfriend Dr. Hayden Kho, in connection with the inquiry of the National Bureau of Investigation into the raging sex video scandal.

One Dr. Eric Johnston Chua will also be invited to explain how the videos featuring Kho in sexual encounters with actress Katrina Halili and other women ended up on the Net, according to Vicente de Guzman, head of the NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division.

"We will be inviting all personalities mentioned by Ms Halili in her statement, as well as other personalities whose names will surface in connection with this case," De Guzman said Thursday at a press conference.

He said the inquiry would be "focused on the case of Halili," and that subpoenas would be issued later to the other "victims."

Halili said she heard that Belo also had a sex video with Kho.

"I heard that rumor . . . That was also gossiped about," she said.

"We shouldn't be afraid to fight back. If we don't do anything, it's like we're tolerating him. There are lots of victims out there. Most are not from show biz—women who were victimized by their ex-boyfriends with cell phone and webcam videos," Halili said.

On Tuesday, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. delivered a privilege speech assailing Kho for filming his sexual encounters with Halili and other women.

Kho has a "library" of 40 sex videos with different women, apparently filmed without their knowledge, Revilla said in a statement Thursday. He called on "other victims of Kho" to come out and press charges, saying this would be an "act of vindication," particularly for those in videos making the rounds of the public domain.

On Wednesday, Halili filed a complaint with the NBI against Kho for videotaping their lovemaking without her consent. The video has been circulating in the Net and is now being sold in DVD form.

Thursday, the actress went to the Professional Regulation Commission and filed an administrative complaint for immorality and dishonorable and unethical conduct against Kho.

She asked the PRC to revoke Kho's license and ban him from practicing medicine.

Kho

Belo

De Guzman said Kho and other persons suspected of involvement in the production and proliferation of the sex video may be charged with violation of Republic Act No. 9262 (or the Anti-Violence against Women and Children Act of 2004).

"We will look into other [charges] that could possibly be filed," he said, noting that "laws against cyber crime, particularly pornography," were nonexistent.

De Guzman also said the NBI would seek the help of the maintainers of the website where the Kho-Halili sex video was posted, in determining who had uploaded it on the Net.

Still friends

Leah Salterio, public relations officer of Belo Medical Clinic, said Belo broke up with Kho in December 2008 because of the sex video but had remained friends with him.

Salterio said Kho and Belo were consulting the company's lawyer, Adel Tamano, concerning the NBI subpoena.

She said Belo had yet to read the subpoena because it was delivered to the clinic's branch on Tomas Morato Avenue in Quezon City.

Kho resigned from the clinic in December 2008.

In the complaint she filed with the PRC, Halili said she met Kho between June and July 2007 when she went to the Belo clinic.

She said she and Kho became sweethearts in August 2007, but that she decided to end the relationship in January 2008. She also admitted having had a sexual relationship with Kho.

This was how Halili narrated the subsequent turn of events:

Sometime in December 2008, she got wind of talk that a sex video featuring her and Kho was making the rounds. She confronted him about it, and he said that there was no such a video.

On Dec. 26, 2008, Halili's road manager, Omar Sortijas, received a text message from Kho also denying any sex video with any actress.

But another text message sent by Kho to Sortijas on that day stated that no one could watch the video because Belo had his hard disk and she was ignorant of computer matters: "Walang makakanuod nun dahil na kay Vicki yung hard disk ko. Wala siyang pnagbigyan ng copy dhel di naman yun marunong mag computer."

On May 17, after the Kho-Halili sex video circulated in public, Kho reportedly sent this text message to Sortijas: "There r 4 videos with kat, if m not mistaken. 2 dancing. 1 talking. And 1 obscene."

Halili said that the next day, she was able to watch the video through www.uploads.ph. She said it was very clear that it was Kho who set up the camera without her knowledge and consent.

Kho has also been seen in other sex videos featuring himself and other women.

'Unethical acts'

Halili's lawyer Raymund Palad said Kho's acts were immoral and a violation of the provisions of the Medical Act of 1959, as well as the Code of Ethics.

"The unethical acts of Dr. Hayden Kho fall short of that strict moral standard required of a professional, especially in the medical profession. [Kho] is a disgrace to the medical profession and the Board should discipline [him] to serve as a deterrent to others," Palad said.

"The injury caused to the person, honor and reputation of the complainant is so gross and serious in nature. The immorality perpetrated by the respondent should not go unpunished," the lawyer said, adding that Kho was "no longer fit to enjoy the privileges of the profession of medicine."

Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Leila de Lima said the posting of the Kho-Halili sex video was "clearly malicious" and violated the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

"I hate to say this but Filipino women clearly do not get enough respect," De Lima said in a statement.

"If Filipino men do not respect Filipino women, how can we expect a human rights culture in a world where our women, including migrant workers, are often degraded?" she said.

De Lima pushed for the enactment of the Magna Carta for Women, to ensure further protection of women against abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

"The issue here is not the fact that the personalities are well known. It is that porn happened," De Lima said.

She described pornography as a form of psychological violence against women.

"[It] perpetuates the image of women as objects," which can lead to other forms of violence such as trafficking and date rape, she said.

Swift action

Halili's case has triggered action in high places.

Sen. Pia Cayetano has filed a bill seeking to prohibit and penalize the recording of private acts, as well as the sharing and exhibition of the recording, without the consent of the person involved.

Cayetano filed the proposed "Anti-Video Voyeurism Act of 2009" on Wednesday, a day after Revilla's privilege speech.

Cayetano said many women caught in sex scandals on the Net and mobile phones were "doubly" victimized—"first, when the recording is made without their consent, and second, when such recording is viewed again and again."

"Such a violation is condemnable and needs to be penalized in the highest degree," she said.

Undersecretary Anthony Golez, deputy spokesperson of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, said Malacañang would back any legislation "that would protect the rights of women and children."

Kho has been placed on the Bureau of Immigration's watch list, preventing him from leaving the country without clearance from the Department of Justice, according to Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan.

Amalia Fuentes wants to stop robbery raps

By TETCH TORRES
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Actress Amalia Fuentes asked Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to overturn the recommendation of the Quezon City prosecutor's office to charge her with robbery.

Fuentes said she filed a petition for review, and not a motion for reconsideration, so that a new prosecutor would handle the case. She said the prosecutor that originally handled the case "erred" when it said that she should be charged in court.

The actress added that she was not given a chance to respond to the complaint, filed by her brother Rafael Anton, and Editha Lopez-Bernardo.

She accused her estranged husband, Joseph Stevens, of using Anton to file charges against her.

Anton and Bernardo alleged that Fuentes and her co-accused picked the lock of the First Mindanao Agriculture Corporation (FMA) office in November 2007 and carted away several items from the office, including personal files, manager's checks, digital cameras, car registrations, titles, check books and stock certificates all worth P243,721.44.

Fuentes' co-accused include her son, Gerard, Edmark Ramirez and Diosdado Cabilbil.

Manoy's grandson wants to be like him

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—One of the young students in the ongoing GMA Artist Center summer workshops is 12-year-old JR Garcia, grandson of screen legend Eddie Garcia.

"I want to follow in my lolo's footsteps," says JR, only child of Eddie's son Erwin with Mikaela Bilbao, owner of Philosophy by Mikaela beauty center.

JR immediately stands out in a crowd because of his full head of curls—like Little Orphan Annie's. "He got that from his Lolo Eddie," says Mikaela.

"His eyes has the same spark as his grandfather's," says Ida Henares, GMAAC head.

The kid has his lolo's chutzpah, too. He didn't tell his mom about his desire to join the biz. He didn't even warn his mom that he would ask her friend, Lolit Solis, to manage him.

He recalls: "Mom told me to bring lechon for Nanay Lolit to the set of 'Star Talk.' I asked Nanay Lolit if she could manage me." Asking permission from mom came much later.

"After the fact," explains Mikaela. "He didn't really ask. He wanted it badly. Kids today are so independent."

At the time of this interview, the sixth grader has yet to inform his lolo. "I want to surprise him," he says.

He has seen his grandfather's movies like "Sanggano't Sanggago" with Bayani Agbayani and "Fuchsia" with Gloria Romero. He's also a regular viewer of Eddie's GMA 7 series, "Totoy Bato."

JR Garcia: "My goal is to be a good character actor." He has asked Lolit Solis to manage him.

His biggest dream is to share the screen with his grandfather. "I want to learn from him," he notes. "I admire him as an actor. He can play all sorts of roles. And my goal is to be a good character actor."

He is taking acting classes under theater vet Nanding Josef and GMAAC's Lou Gopez.

"I've picked up lots of tips," JR says. "I've learned how to value my blessings and how to act naturally in front of the camera."

Maharlika – Opinyon

A new age of ignorance

The Philippines has come under mounting international rebuke for breaches of covenants that have thrown back the country to the dark ages of human torture and book-burning.

In a 12-page report released this week, the United Nations Committee Against Torture lambasted the government for its lack of compliance with the 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The report criticized the Philippine government for submitting its report "16 years late," the delay indicating the government's insensitivity to inhuman torture and the low priority it has placed on human lives. The UN committee expressed "grave concern" over what it called "a climate of impunity" involving police, military and other government officials that has paved the way for such brutal acts.

The report came on the heels of the April 29 follow-up report of Philip Alston, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings. The Alston Report decried that although there has been a significant decrease in the number of extrajudicial executions, the government has failed to make "substantive progress" in institutionalizing reforms recommended by the UN rapporteur.

This series of reports came amid a tempest over a Department of Finance Order No. 17-09 which slaps customs duties on imported books, in contravention of the 1950 Florence Agreement (signed by the Philippines in 1952), which is aimed at liberalizing the flow of printed material into the contracting states. The Florence Agreement provides that the contracting states undertake not to apply customs duties on imported books, publications and documents. The agreement guarantees the free flow of "educational, scientific, and cultural materials" between countries by declaring that imported books should be duty-free.

This wave of illiberal actions of the Philippine government—ranging from torture to death squad executions of leftist activists—draws a pattern reminiscent of the methods and mentality of a police state that was established in 14 years of the Marcos dictatorship, and set the country to an era of the dark ages when book censorship and book-burning were standard practices deployed by Church and secular authorities to suppress ideas considered heretical and a threat to the security of ruling regimes. These illiberal tendencies are now swamping the Philippines which is on the verge of another presidential election, the foundation of its claim to being a democratic and liberal society. The controversy over what has now developed into the Great Book Blockade of 2009 was ignited when Customs officials imposed duties on the best-seller book "Twilight" by Stephenie Meyer, which attracted attention from customs because copies of the book were imported in large numbers.

Analysis

By AMANDO DORONILA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The blockade started when customs imposed a flat duty of 1 percent on educational books and 5 percent on all other kinds of books. The duties were based on the restrictive interpretation by customs and finance department officials of Republic Act 8047, the Book Publishing Industry Development Act, which allows "tax and duty-free importation of books or raw materials to be used in book publishing." Customs Undersecretary Estela Sales ruled that RA 8047 specifically provides that imported "books or raw materials to be used in book publishing" are tax exempt, thereby creating a special category of books that may be tax-exempt. A customs examiner, Rene Agulan, demanded that duties be paid for a large shipment of "Twilight" books, saying that the books were subject to import duties because they were not educational. This leaves to Customs officials the discretion to determine whether an imported book is to be used for publishing books or is educational, scientific and cultural material.

The Bureau of Customs is under pressure from the administration to jack up its revenue collections to finance the government's deficit spending in connection with its fiscal stimulus program to counter the global recession. Whatever the purpose of the book blockade, it is extremely dangerous to leave in the hands of bureaucrats the determination of what imported books will be duty-free. The DoF says the duties are not revenue-raising measures. Bureaucrats are not the most enlightened class of officials, and they are as easily susceptible as the religious bigots and fanatics, and the police and censors to abuse their power to determine what books are to be taxed or banned from general circulation. Give bureaucrats the power to ban books, depending upon their motives, personal inclination or desire to please their political masters, and the precedent on the "Twilight" blockade opens the floodgates of censorship of books of whatever category or paves the way for the establishment of such repressive institutions such as the Holy Inquisition and the Index of Forbidden Books published by the Catholic Church to ban the circulation of heretical works.

The ruling on the "Twilight" book has nothing to do with its content. It is not a political or religious book containing an idea dangerous to the stability of regimes or the existence of established religious institutions. "Twilight" is a romance novel about the life of Isabella "Bella" Swan, a teenager who finds her life in danger after she falls in love with a vampire. Any moment authorities pass judgment on books, the stage for mind control, inquisition and physical torture is set. More than that, censors become the vanguard of a new age of ignorance.

EDITORIAL

Erap's folly

The constitutional provision is as plain as day. In Article VII, Sec. 4, we read: "The President shall not be eligible for any re-election." But in the alternate universe of Joseph Estrada, all kinds of shadows darken the prohibition on re-election. We realize that the 21st century has not been kind to the former movie actor: after he became the first president to be impeached in 2000, he was ousted and arrested in 2001, tried and finally convicted of two counts of well-documented plunder in 2007, then pardoned almost immediately after by his political archenemy and now benefactor. These circumstances can be profoundly disorienting—why else would Estrada think running for president again would be in the nation's highest interests?

If Estrada runs again, it will only be for personal vindication—as though sitting in Malacañang again can ever expunge the incontrovertible evidence of wrongdoing his trial revealed. It cannot be for the sake of opposition unity; how could it be, when his answer to the prospect of several oppositionists running for president is to join the race?

Does Estrada think he can fool the people all the time?

In April 1997, a little over a year before Estrada was elected president, a Social Weather Stations survey found him, then the vice president, at the top of the list—together with then-senator Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Some 23 percent of the respondents chose him as their probable first choice for president; a statistically similar 22 percent chose Arroyo.

As we know now, this survey was an accurate reflection of the political dynamics leading up to the 1998 elections. After Arroyo eventually decided to contest the vice presidency, Estrada won Malacañang with the biggest winning margin in history.

Fast forward to February 2009, the date of the most recent comparable SWS survey. Among respondents asked to choose the best candidate to replace President Arroyo, only 13 percent chose Estrada. Six other political personalities did better than him; four out-polled him by a double-digit margin: Vice President Noli de Castro (who was selected by 27 percent of the respondents), Sen. Manuel Villar (26 percent), Sen. Loren Legarda (25 percent) and Sen. Francis Escudero (23 percent).

By what right does Estrada claim, as he did the other day, that only De Castro can rival him in political popularity, especially among the poor? The latest survey shows fewer people support him for president now, a year or so before the next elections, than did in 1997, a year before he was elected president.

In other words, Estrada is acting like a has-been, who continues to hear the screaming fans long after they have gone. That we should even be discussing Estrada's chances of re-election is the egregious result of the Arroyo administration's blunder: At the moment of his conviction, it treated Estrada as though he were still at the height of his popularity.

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Saving Bohol's past

Once in the great Paris flea market, at the Porte de Clignancourt, I saw a handful of Bohol "santos" on display. Before asking for the price I innocently asked for their provenance—where were these wonderful folk images of the Virgin Mary originally from—and was told they came from Latin America! I did not argue because I was certain that if these were correctly labeled as coming from the Philippines, they would cost much less. I had a similar experience in an antique mall in New York City where Bohol "santos" were said to be South American and cost more.

The Philippine "santos" came into their own two decades ago when an Architectural Digest cover story carried pictures of Elton John's sitting room ornamented with Philippine "santos" of wood and ivory heads. In the recent Christie's Paris auction of the collection of Yves Saint Laurent, there were two Hispano-Philippine ivories from the 17th or 18th century. One of the ivories, a head of Christ figured prominently on YSL's coffee table. There is belated awareness of Filipino heritage these days, helpful if only to preserve the little we have left.

Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Fifteen years ago, I was shown an empty niche in Dimiao church where an ancient retablo once stood. It was sacrificed to fund church repairs in the 1970s and pioneering antique dealer Nene Cortes shipped it to Manila. Is this the same one now displayed in the National Museum? If large objects like retablos, pulpits and architectural details can be moved, what more portable valuable objects like church silver and ivories? What about old books, manuscripts and archival material that are the first consigned to a fire?

I remember a fiesta in Bohol where I watched the town band perform pop hits. While everyone had their eyes on the legs of the majorettes who twirled batons seductively, my eyes spotted the drum tops covered with Gregorian chant. Someone had put these ancient pig-skin choir books in the bodega to good use: when the drums of the town band broke they replaced it with a page from the oversized choir book. Frankly, if it were possible to convert these choir books into chicharon, these would have disappeared much earlier and Dr. William Summers would not be able to tell us about early music in Bohol, including the crude but historically important "Misa Baclayana," a musical setting for the Mass reconstructed from old music found in Bohol churches.

While I am happy that foreigners come to study Philippine culture, one wonders why Filipinos don't seem to care. One reason is that we see our culture every day but we rarely sit back and notice. With the exception of Bohol historians Marianito Luspo and Jess Tirol, much of what I know of Bohol heritage comes from Manila-based researchers: Regalado Trota Jose (now a Dominican), Fr. Rene Javellana (Jesuit), Augusto Villalon (secular), Romeo Allianigue (ex-Carmelite), Osmundo Esguerra (furniture expert), Ramon Villegas (antique dealer) and Esperanza Gatbonton (independent researcher). Why isn't more research on Bohol being done in Bohol? By Boholanos? Now that is both a challenge and a wish.

Heritage awareness these days is often focused on structures at risk, those that are being torn down to make way for modern buildings, or those being renovated beyond recognition. There is much more to Bohol than churches, watchtowers and natural landscape—the draft for the pre-history of Bohol, the history of Bohol before written records, is waiting to be written up from archeological records and artifacts in the National Museum and the writings of the pioneering pre-historian of the Philippines, H. Otley Beyer. Then there is the Guthe collection in the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology in Ann Arbor.

Carl E. Guthe headed an archeological expedition to the Philippines from 1922 to 1925, and from his base in Opon, Cebu, he excavated thousands of artifacts that now form the core of the museum's Asia Division. These artifacts and records were brought back for future study and research, but 84 years later these material still cry out for a researcher to piece this unwritten history together.

Bohol is a success story for eco and heritage tourism, it has everything a tourist will want: beaches, Chocolate Hills, tarsier, colonial churches and watchtowers, plus a hospitable people. Loboc is a smashing success with its choir and river cruise. The Baclayon church museum is run by Baclayanons proud of their "native" delicacies: the Bohol chocolate, Baclayon broas, and Dauis torta are welcome contributions to the development of our national cuisine.

Loose tongues from narrow minds often argue that cultural heritage is a useless expense in a country with so much poverty. But in Bohol cultural heritage has generated jobs, encouraged small businesses and given Boholanos a sense of pride, self and identity. Perhaps there is truth to the saying that familiarity breeds contempt, worse, it often breeds apathy—that is why four historical markers were installed in Dauis and Maribijoc last week so that people will see and notice. That Bohol is culturally rich led to a suggestion that the National Historical Institute declare the whole province a national landmark.

At the very least it will save on historical markers from Manila, and preserve and develop what's left of Bohol heritage.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika–Samu't Sari

FMI MOTHERS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Friends of the Marianas recently honored its 2009 FMI Mothers of the Year as part of celebrations of Mother's Day. The honorees are Mrs. Rose Adams, center, Mrs. Sitsit Abe, and Mrs. Melecia P. Marquez.

MISS EARTH DIVA DONATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sharmaine Casquero, left, presents Beautify CNMI's Angelo Villagomez with a $100 donation. The Filipino Gay Association recently donated proceeds from the Miss Gay Diva beauty pageant to Beautify CNMI to support their environmental programs. The $100 donation will be used to design a new t-shirt for volunteers.

NEW CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy Christening to Frances Louise, who was recently dedicated to the Lord in a baptismal ceremony. Here, Frances Louise is with her Daddy Lui and Mommy Gigi as the family celebrates the occasion at the Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

LAU-LAU CLEANUP CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Friends of the Marianas clean up the Lau-Lau Beach last Sunday, May 17, 2009. The cleanup was funded by Mobil Oil Marianas Inc.

PEACEFUL VIGIL HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Guest workers begin their three-day peaceful assembly early Monday morning in front of TSL Plaza in Garapan to press for better immigration status in the CNMI. The vigil was held to coincide with the subcommittee hearing held in Washington D.C. on the implementation of the federalization law in the CNMI

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Guest workers holding a peaceful assembly in front of the TSL Plaza express their sentiment for better immigration status with large banners and t-shirts spray-painted with calls opposing further delays in the implementation of the federalization law.

Youngstyle

Smithsonian movie shows the Wright stuff

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

THE WASHINGTON POST
The National Air and Space Museum's grand entry hall, Milestones of Flight, showcases a collection of historic aircraft and spacecraft that represent epic achievements in aviation and space flight. Air and Space, in Washington, is the most-visited museum in the world (8 million people a year).

THE WASHINGTON POST
To make scenes for a film that features the National Air and Space Museum, moviemakers reproduced some of its galleries in a massive studio in Canada, shown here. Portions of "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian" were shot in Washington at the popular museum.

WASHINGTON—The plane that Orville and Wilbur Wright used for their historic first flight in 1903 could never do the stunts it performs in the movie "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian." In fact, the Wright brothers' plane, on display at the National Air and Space Museum, can barely fly at all by today's standards, according to Bob van der Linden, who runs the aeronautics department at the museum.

But the movie's thrilling chase scene that shows the 106-year-old plane soaring out of the museum doesn't bother van der Linden one bit. "That's just Hollywood," he said.

Van der Linden understands that Hollywood's romp through Air and Space will be especially fun for anyone who has been to the museum. Since it is the most-visited museum in the world (8 million people a year walk through the doors!), a lot of moviegoers will recognize the setting. Portions of the movie were shot inside the museum, and its interior was painstakingly reproduced in a massive studio in Canada for scenes that couldn't be shot here.

"All of the design cues that scream `Air and Space Museum' are in it," van der Linden said, including things that you might not notice when you're in the museum but that will look awfully familiar on screen, such as the marble walls, carpeting and worn brass railings. "I can see why movies cost millions of dollars to make," van der Linden said.

When you see the movie, spotting the exhibits you know will add another layer of fun, as will figuring out which scenes were shot in the real museum and which scenes were shot on the set. (Hint: Look for the exhibits that aren't where they usually are!)

The astronauts' space bathroom

By HOWARD BENNETT
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

THE WASHINGTON POST
This toilet aboard the space shuttle Atlantis has a suction fan. Instead of flushing, a space toilet works like a giant vacuum cleaner that sucks away the astronaut's waste.

Last week, the space shuttle Atlantis blasted off for an 11-day mission to repair the Hubble Space Telescope. In addition to the seven American astronauts on Atlantis, there are three astronauts living and working on the international space station. With 10 humans orbiting Earth, it seemed like as good a time as any to talk about what astronauts do when nature calls.

Alan Shepard was the first American to be launched into space. His mission was a 15-minute flight that took place on May 5, 1961, in the Freedom 7 spacecraft. According to NASA records, Shepard had to pee minutes before his ship was about to take off. He told the mission commander about his predicament because he couldn't hold it anymore, and it was apparently too late for him to leave the ship. After a quick discussion among NASA scientists, Shepard was told he could pee inside the spacesuit without causing any problems. It must have smelled wonderful when he removed his suit after the flight.

The next American to go into space was Gus Grissom, who took a similar flight on July 21, 1961. One can bet that Grissom learned from Shepard's mistake and went to the bathroom before liftoff. (Now you know why your parents ask you to go to the bathroom before you leave the house!)

Since the early days of the spaceflight, NASA has learned a lot about what to do with human waste while astronauts are away from Mother Earth. The international space station and today's space vehicles are equipped with special toilets that work in a gravity-free environment. (If they didn't, there would be a lot more flying about the ship than pens and pencils!) Instead of flushing, a space toilet works like a giant vacuum cleaner that sucks away the astronaut's waste.

If astronauts go on a spacewalk for an extended time, what do you think they do? They wear diapers inside their spacesuits. They don't call them diapers, of course, because that term clearly has a non-scientific ring to it. Instead, they're called MAGs, which stands for maximum absorption garments.

Do you still want to be an astronaut when you grow up?

Bennett, a Washington pediatrician and author of health-related books for kids, writes about gross things for KidsPost.

Where in the world? These kids know

WASHINGTON—Eric Yang, a seventh-grader from Texas, won the National Geographic Bee Wednesday by answering this question:

"Timis County shares its name with a tributary of the Danube and is located in the western part of which European country?"

Eric's answer, Romania, won him a $25,000 scholarship and a trip to the Galapagos Islands with bee moderator and "Jeopardy!" host Alex Trebek. But Eric, 13, admits he was stumped by some of the questions. "I made educated guesses on some of them," he said.

Fifty-five kids, ages 9 to 15, competed in the bee, which was held in downtown Washington.

Eric got most of his geography knowledge by reading cookbooks, which he said have great information about people, cultures and lifestyles around the world. He loves to cook.

Eric also likes basketball, swimming and playing the piano. When he grows up, he wants a job where he "takes care of people," he said.

The final round of the contest will be broadcast on public television on dates to be determined. ***((c) 2009, The Washington Post)***

THE WASHINGTON POST
Eric Yang, a seventh-grader from Texas, won the National Geographic Bee held Wednesday in Washington. Yang, shown with host Alex Trebek, got a lot of his geography knowledge by reading cookbooks, which he said have great information about people, cultures and lifestyles around the world.

By FRED BOWEN
*Special to the*Washington Post

Bowen is an author of sports novels for kids.

Blowing the whistle on youth sports

I recently read a new book called "Until It Hurts: America's Obsession With Youth Sports and How It Harms Our Kids," written by Baltimore sportswriter Mark Hyman. It is not a kids' book, but it's about kids' sports. Hyman argues that some adults—parents included—take youth sports too seriously, and that can spoil the fun for kids.

Here are some of the things I learned from the book that kids and their parents should know.

Overuse injuries from kids playing their sports too much at an early age are way up. They include sore ankles and knees from playing soccer or basketball year-round and sore elbows from pitching too much.

Lyle Micheli, a sports doctor in Boston, estimates that in the early 1990s, 20 percent of the injuries to kids he treated were from overuse. Now, he estimates, 75 percent are from overuse. Micheli says overuse injuries could be cut to almost zero if coaches and parents would simply let kids: (1) play a variety of sports; (2) take it easier; and (3) rest a day or two from sports every week.

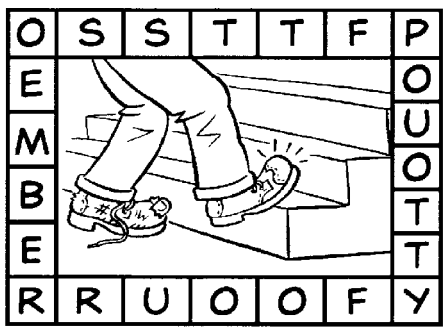
Hyman tells the story of Whitney Phelps, an older sister of Michael Phelps, the Olympic gold-medal swimmer. Whitney was a great swimmer, maybe as good as her famous brother, but she never made the Olympics. She swam too much too soon, and she got hurt.

So if you are a kid who plays soccer or baseball in the spring and fall, maybe you should try another sport for summer camp. If you don't believe me, you might believe Tommy John. He won 288 games as a major league pitcher. John refuses to give pitching lessons to kids who are younger than 13. "Those kids do not need to be playing baseball year-round," John says.

Of course, lots of coaches and parents believe that if kids specialize in one sport at an early age and work really hard, they will increase their chances for a sports scholarship to college. But Hyman notes that in a survey of 500 college athletes, about 65 percent said it was not necessary to specialize in a sport before high school in order to play in college.

Hyman also points out that sports scholarships are a very small part of the scholarship pool for college. One recent study indicates that only 18 percent of the scholarship aid at public colleges and only 7 percent at private colleges is for sports. So your chances of getting money for college are a lot better if you are a good student than if you are a good athlete.

I think sports are good for kids. Sports can help kids stay healthy, make new friends and learn to handle disappointment. But as Hyman points out, when seasons last too long and coaches push too hard, youth sports can be too much of a good thing.

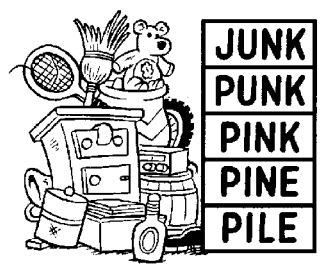


HIDDEN IN THE ABOVE FRAME is a famous proverb. Find it by reading every other letter as you go around it clockwise. The trick is finding the right first letter.

Answer: Starting with the "P" in the upper right-hand corner of the frame: "Put your best foot foremost."

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



Illustrated by David Coulson

HERE'S A 'SCRAPPY' PROBLEM! In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move, you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example, we changed JUNK to PILE in four moves. See if you can change the following five words in four moves

1. CENT to DIME
2. BIRD to CAGE
3. MILD to DARE
4. HURT to WELL
5. WILL to DEED

Answers:
1. CENT, DENT, DINT, DINE, DIME.
2. BIRD, BARD, CARD, CARE, CAGE.
3. MILD, MILE, MALE, MARE, DARE.
4. HURT, HURL, HULL, HELL, WELL.
5. WILL, WILD, WELD, WEED, DEED.

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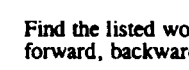
ODD MAN OUT! To the right is a list of five words. Can you figure out which word doesn't belong on the list?

Answer: Letter. The other words all contain the name of a color. (1. Red. 2. Tan. 4. Umber. 5. Teal.)

LITTLE 'PITCHERS' HAVE BIG EARS! In this puzzle, all of the words get progressively longer, and they all begin with EAR. The following hints should help.

1. Ear (in place).
2. British nobleman.
3. Everybody lives here.
4. Brings home the bacon.
5. A winter warmer.
6. Identifying characteristics.



Answers: 1. Ear. 2. Earl. 3. Earth. 4. Earner. 5. Earlap. 6. Earmarks.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was American comedian, actor, and writer George Burns who made the following sage observation: "The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending, then having the two as close together as possible."

■ If you're like the average American, you watch a whopping 4 hours and 44 minutes of television every day.

■ In all likelihood, you've never run across a moirologist—in fact, they probably don't even exist in the United States today. However, professional mourners—which is what moirologists are—have a long history, dating back to ancient Greece. Even as recently as the early 1900s, there was a report of a moirologists' strike in Paris.

■ Another reason to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of that iconic Irish export, Guinness: Studies show that the stout beer contains antioxidant compounds that benefit the heart by slowing down the accumulation of bad cholesterol on the walls of arteries. Cheers!

■ According to a recent news story on the website of the British Broadcasting Corporation, eight police officers in Scotland claim their religion to be Jedi—as in the Jedi Knights of George Lucas' "Star Wars" films. And it seems they're not the only ones: According to the 2001 census, there are 14,000 adherents of Jedi in Scotland, and another 390,000 in England and Wales. There's even a UK Church of the Jedi, founded by brothers Barney and Daniel Jones, which offers light saber training and teaches about The Force.

■ If you're right-handed, studies show that you tend to wash your left hand more thoroughly than your right hand. Reverse that if you're a leftie.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Drive-in banks were established so most of the cars today could see their real owners."—E. Joseph Cossman

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MAGIC MAZE ● ACADEMY AWARD HOSTS

Q H D A X N U R P M J G D A X
V S Q N K I A F D A X V L T Q
S N C O M N O M M E L J A H F
L E A C A Y W A K U R P T N L
J E R M H F S R K C O R S D B
Y Z S E R I A T S A A X Y V T
R N O S N E Q I O W Y J R M K
I H N A E E T N E F D E C B Z
Y W T E P J G T V T R Q O N L
K R I O B H S E E F D C A Z X
A W H V G R E B D L O G U S R

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Astaire	DeGeneres	Jessel	Martin
Benny	Goldberg	Kaye	Rock
Carson	Hope	Lemmon	Stewart
Crystal	Jackman	Letterman	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		6
x		–		+	
	–		x		8
–		x		+	
	x		+		11
22		15		7	

1 2 2 3 4 5 6 8 9

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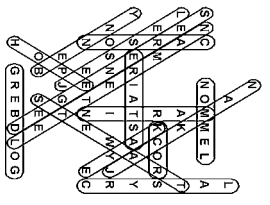
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

3	+	9	÷	6	
x		–		2	
8	–	6	x	4	8
–		x		+	
2	x	5	+	1	11
	22		15		7

The right pet food

Paw's corner by Sam Mazzotta

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I read all the time about how the best cat diets are fresh food this, raw food that. I'm all for a healthy pet, but I don't have time to cook "Jamie" a fresh dinner every night. Is there just a good all-around pet food she can eat instead? —Margie in Atlanta

DEAR MARGIE. Don't feel guilty about time impacting what you can feed to your cat. The fact that you're thinking and reading about it means you do care, and you're trying to give her the best food you can.

Kibble or canned food mixed with fresh on various days throughout the week will provide a varied and healthy diet. Choose the best dry/canned food possible, based on Jamie's age and health. Often your cat's veterinarian will recommend a brand and type. Tell the vet about any fresh foods you plan to feed Jamie, in case there are any foods he or she does not want her to eat.

Jamie's diet can be planned a week in advance, based around your schedule, and some fresh foods can be prepared and stored, covered in the refrigerator, for up to three days. For example, if you work later on one night than another, that is perhaps a good day to feed her dry kibble, which you or a friend can put in her bowl at feeding time (with a full bowl of water nearby, of course).

Canned or fresh food should also be served at the regular feeding time. Once Jamie is finished, wash and dry her bowl thoroughly before going to bed for the night to prevent growth of bacteria.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Transform cereal box into adventure book

Donna's Day Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson

You and your preschooler can write a big adventure story in your own little book made from a recycled single-portion cereal box. Use as a "Spring Firsts" nature-walk journal or a photo album, or make a collection where each has a theme such as "the ABCs," "Counting," "Farm Animals," "The Adventures of our Super Kitty" or "Presley's Top Ten Jokes."

Here's how to repurpose your cereal box and transform it into a book:

Remove the liner from a single-portion cereal box. Cut off the top, right-side and bottom panels of the box and toss them in your recycling bin. The remaining portion of cardboard will be the front, spine and back of the book.

Paint or cover both sides of your new book with solid-colored or patterned adhesive-backed paper. Decorate with stickers, drawings or photos, or cut out shapes from contrasting colors of adhesive-backed paper. Write or print with your computer the title of your book on a piece of paper. Cut it to size and glue on the front of the book.

For pages, cut several sheets of construction paper slightly smaller than the book cover.

To bind the book, punch two holes along the center of the spine, one hole 1/2 inch from the top and the other 1/2 inch from the bottom. Punch corresponding holes in the paper. Thread ribbon, cording or string through the holes, from top to bottom, and knot it on the outside.

Help your child write the adventure and illustrate the story with drawings, photos or pictures from catalogs and magazines. Remember to include a title page with the author's name.

"The grandkids are coming!" tip: When your school-age grandchild comes for a visit, start the day with "box-top reading" before you turn the cereal box into a book. Surprise each other with the new vocabulary words you pick up. Read ingredients and nutritional information listed on the side panel of the box, and continue by reading the content on the yogurt and milk cartons sitting on the breakfast table.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Lambert lovers mourn, but does 'Idol' loss matter?

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) -- Adam Lambert fans, take heart: At least your guy doesn't have to sing the hokey "No Boundaries," this year's much mocked "American Idol" ballad, ever, ever again. That dubious honor will go to winner Kris Allen. But there are other reasons Lambert lovers can dry their tears.

Given the glam-rocker's unique persona, his strong fan base and the massive exposure he's gotten, he may be as likely as any "American Idol" winner to achieve that elusive stardom the show tries so hard to achieve.

Not to take anything from Allen, the fresh-faced, soulful Arkansas crooner who surprised many—and himself, to judge by his stunned expression—by taking the crown. His victory showed he has both the musical chops and the broad-based appeal to be a star, too.

But not simply because he won. Industry insiders say that once that "Idol" bubble breaks at the end of the season, all bets are off.

"It doesn't really matter if you win," said Diane Warren, the Grammy-winning songwriter who's written for Whitney Houston, Celine Dion, and Mary J. Blige, not to mention "Idol" alums like Carrie Underwood, Kelly Clarkson and Jennifer Hudson. "It's all about what you do after the show."

For Lambert, who cut his teeth in musical theater and drew outsized attention from the start with commanding vocals, a signature banshee wail, flamboyant outfits and yes, the eyeliner and black nail polish, the future is particularly bright, Warren said.

"He's just a hands-down star," said Warren. "He's different. He shook things up."

And it may even help that he came in second, she said, because he'll have more control over his career: "There's not as much of a committee plotting your every move."

It's well known that an "Idol" victory does not a star make. Kelly Clarkson, the first-season winner, became a pop radio staple; Ruben Studdard, the next year, did not. Fourth-season winner Carrie Underwood is arguably the reigning high priestess of country music; the next season's winner, Taylor Hicks, is set to play Teen Angel in the Broadway production of "Grease."

As for the also-rans, Clay Aiken, who lost to Studdard, became a much bigger star. Chris Daughtry, who came in fourth the year Hicks won, sold more than 1 million copies of his self-titled album after five weeks, the fastest-selling debut rock album in history. And just ask Oscar, Golden Globe and Grammy winner Jennifer Hudson, who came in seventh in season 3, if there's life after an "Idol" loss.

AP
American Idol finalists Adam Lambert, left, and Kris Allen arrive to the season finale of American Idol on Wednesday, May 20, 2009, in Los Angeles.

For now, all that may be cold comfort to Lambert fans, many of whom woke up Thursday morning feeling bereft.

"I know Adam will have a great career, but I'm upset on principle," said Janet Metz, a stage actress and singer. "Talent did not win out."

Her husband, Michael Unger, is also a fan. "Besides his charisma, Adam's vocal range is amazing," said Unger, who directs both theater and opera. "He hits those notes without straining his voice. He sang the high notes in that Queen song last night with an ease that even Freddie Mercury would have been proud of."

In Ottawa, Canada, Lambert fan Alison Edgar was doubly upset—first, that Lambert lost, and second, that she hadn't been able to help. As a Canadian, she couldn't vote.

"It's very frustrating to have to rely on others," said Edgar, 34. She'd spent the evening commiserating online with fellow Lambert fans. "There are a lot of sad people out there," she sighed.

And why did she think Lambert lost? "I have a feeling Adam is a bit too radical for some Americans," she said. She also echoed a common theory: that fans of Danny Gokey, the bespectacled, understated church music director who came in third, had thrown their weight behind Allen.

"I think some Kris and Danny fans got together and said, 'Adam's too weird, let's get him out,'" Edgar said.

Certainly there have been unkind references on blogs to Lambert's attire, which ranged from relatively tame dark jeans and leather jackets to Wednesday's other-wordly ensemble of cage-like wings and elevator boots. (When the band Kiss joined in, though, looking like medieval warriors in Kabuki makeup and platform shoes, Lambert suddenly looked underdressed.)

Among some fans, the Gokey swing vote theory fed into an even broader idea that "American Idol" was much like a U.S. political election, with the red states supporting Kris and the blue states supporting Adam.

Then there was the economic-downturn theory. "Kris Allen's victory signals that America wants a breather from the storm clouds. We need the comfort of a smiling, familiar face," wrote David Capece, managing partner of Sparxoo.com, a business consulting group.

And of course there was the sexuality theory, which held that some voters were not comfortable with the perceived ambiguous nature of Lambert's orientation. The singer has never addressed the issue, saying only: "I know who I am."

The simplest theory, though, was that producers, judges and everyone else simply underestimated Allen's considerable appeal. Starting out slow, the 23-year-old college student and worship leader kept upping his game, with innovative offerings like his acoustic take on Kanye West's "Heartless."

"The show didn't really GET Kris Allen," said Michael Slezak, who blogs about "American Idol" for Entertainment Weekly's Web site. "They didn't know what to do with him. It's no secret that Simon and company wanted Adam and Danny in the final. Kris messed up their plans."

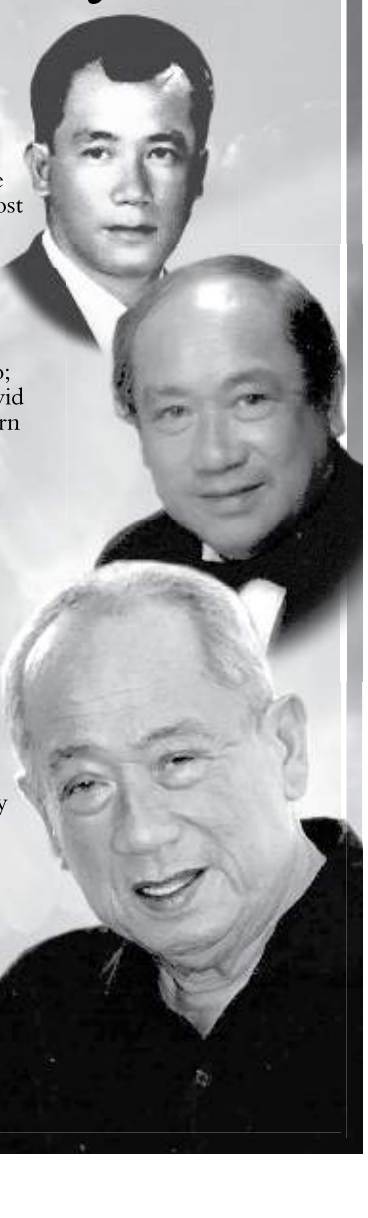
Now, of course, the "Idol" machine will go to work for Allen. "I still think it pays to be a winner of this show, if only for the promotion," Slezak said.

In the end though, he noted, it all comes down to having a strong sense of who you are as a singer and making sure that vision comes through. By that measure, both Allen and Lambert should do well.

Un Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

from the family of the late

RAMON TYDINGCO FEJERAN



To our family, friends and relatives and everyone who stood by us in our time of sorrow.

Our family is comforted by all the prayers and support given to us by so many. We will always remember the overwhelming compassion and affection extended to us and treasure your kind expression of sympathy, encouragement, the extraordinary efforts and labors put forth on our behalf, and most profoundly, your presence during the nightly rosaries, the viewing, funeral and at the interment site.

We would like to acknowledge and give special thanks to:

Rev. Fr. Rey Rosal, Pastor, San Vicente Parish
Judge David A. Wiseman; Judge Ken & Mrs. Doming Govendo; Juan S. Tenorio & Family; Rep. Heinz Hofschneider; Rep. David Apatang; Senator Luis Crisostimo; Senator Pete Reyes; Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (Board, Staff & Management); Hawaiian Rock Products (Management & Employees); Former Governors Juan Babauta and Froilan Tenorio; Frank Cabrera/Nuestra Senora dela Paz; Marianas Health Services; Techas: Sophie Fejeran and Rita Guerrero; Margret Cabrera/The Amazing Grace Choir; Graphic Center, Management & Staff; Guam Department of Public Health & Social Services; Guam Department of Administration; our neighbors, Ahn; Chong Won Don; Kim families; Bobby Ayres; CHC; Saipan & Honolulu Medical Referral; Dr. Laura Shevy; Dr. Shirish Balachandra; Dr. Janna Wilgus; Dr. James Hofschneider; Moses (Moi/Ta Moi) Tydingco Fejeran & Family; Benigno (Ben/Ta Benik) Tydingco Fejeran & Family; Felipe (Iping/Ta Iping) Tydingco Fejeran & Family; Children/Family of Natividad Fejeran Tudela; Children/Family of Isidro Tydingco Fejeran; Calvo families in Saipan, Rota, Guam and the U.S. Mainland.

Nightly Masses are held at the San Vicente Church at 6:00 p.m. and will conclude this Saturday, May 23, 2009 followed by dinner at the family residence in Dandan. Your presence will be greatly appreciated.

God bless you all. Un Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you!

Edith Calvo Fejeran and Children

Youthful Dylan poem was based on existing tune

NEW YORK (AP)—Christie's auction house said Wednesday that an early Bob Dylan poem was based on an existing country tune.

"Little Buddy," estimated to fetch $10,000 to $15,000 once it goes on sale June 23, was "a revised version of lyrics of a Hank Snow song," Christie's said.

Fans of the late Canadian country singer "came out of the woodwork" to say they recognized the lyrics after The Associated Press wrote about the composition on Tuesday, said Christie's pop culture specialist Simeon Lipman.

Dylan was 16 and still going by his given name Bob Zimmerman when he submitted "Little Buddy" in the summer of 1957 for a newspaper at a summer camp in Wisconsin.

Simeon said Wednesday that the verse is still "among the earliest known handwritten lyrics of Bob Dylan," and expected to draw collectors.

According to the Hank Snow Country Music Center Web site, the lyrics and music for "Little Buddy" were composed by Snow, who died in 1999. The song was recorded in 1947 and became the singer's standard on the Grand Ole Opry stage in Nashville, where he performed for 46 years. It tells the poignant story of Little Buddy, who is killed at the hands of a drunkard, and the boy who mourns him.

Dylan revised the lyrics by changing some words around and adding some of his own, in effect following an old folk and country tradition.

An e-mail message left with Dylan's Los Angeles publicist was not immediately returned.

Holly Guncheon, the camp's development director, said Dylan, who turns 68 on Sunday, told camp officials through his nieces and nephews who work at the camp to "do what you want with it."

Fellow camper and editor of the camp paper, Lisa Heilicher, decided to sell the manuscript to help support the camp's $8 million capital campaign.

Palin picks memoir collaborator

NEW YORK (AP) -- Sarah Palin has picked a collaborator for her memoir.

A spokeswoman for SarahPAC, the Alaska governor's political action committee, says that Palin has selected Lynn Vincent, an author and features editor for World magazine, a conservative Christian publication. Palin's book, currently untitled, is scheduled for release next year by HarperCollins.

Vincent, a San Diego resident, has written or co-written several books, among them "Same Kind of Different As Me," "The Blood of Lambs" and "Donkey Cons: Sex, Crime and Corruption in the Democratic Party."

Penn withdraws separation filing from wife Robin

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sean Penn has withdrawn his petition to separate from his wife of 13 years.

The Academy Award winning actor was granted a dismissal Tuesday of his request for a legal separation from actress Robin Wright Penn.

Penn filed for separation in Marin County last month, but records show he moved to dismiss that filing. The record does not indicate why.

Penn told the New York Daily News that the filing was "an arrogant mistake."

The couple have had an on-off relationship. They filed for divorce in December 2007 but dismissed that petition several months later.

In February they attended the Academy Awards together, but the 48-year-old actor neglected to thank his wife after winning for his role in the drama "Milk."

AP

In this Feb. 22, 2009 file photo, Robin Wright Penn, left, and Sean Penn arrive for the 81st Academy Awards in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

A lot to deal with, says reality TV's Jon Gosselin

NEW YORK (AP)—Reality star Jon Gosselin says he and his wife, Kate, have had a lot to deal with lately.

The father of eight (twins and sextuplets) says he and their mom have been busy discussing what's best for the kids as the Gosselin family is facing a media firestorm.

A two-minute preview of Monday's season premiere of TLC's "Jon & Kate Plus 8" provides a glimpse of the Gosselins in the wake of reports that both spouses have cheated on the other. They previously denied the allegations.

Jon and Kate both appear in the clip, posted Wednesday on the TLC Web site. But each of them addresses the camera while seated alone on the couch.

"Kate and I obviously have been going through a lot of stuff, and discussing what's best for our kids," says Jon.

"My kids are the reason I have always done everything," says Kate in a separate segment.

The kids are seen celebrating the sextuplets' fifth birthday party last Sunday at a water park near the Gosselins' Pennsylvania home.

"It gives me like a heart attack thinking about it: My youngest kids are 5!" Kate says wistfully.

AP

In this publicity image released by TLC, reality TV stars, Jon Gosselin, left, and his wife Kate Gosselin, from the TLC series, "Jon & Kate Plus 8," are shown.

In the closest reference to their behind-the-scenes turmoil, Jon says: "The world isn't about ratings and TV. It's about happiness and love ... and family and God."

The season premiere of "Jon & Kate Plus 8" airs 9 p.m. EDT Monday.

Green Day lashes out at Wal-Mart policy

NEW YORK (AP)—Green Day has the most popular CD in the country, but you won't be able to find it at your local Wal-Mart.

The band says the giant superstore chain refused to stock its latest CD, "21st Century Breakdown," because Wal-Mart wanted the album edited for language and content, and they refused.

"Wal-Mart's become the biggest retail outlet in the country, but they won't carry our record because they wanted us to censor it," frontman Billie Joe Armstrong said in a recent interview.

While Wal-Mart sells CDs from acts known for raunchy content, including Eminem's latest, they offer customers the "clean" version of those CDs, which are edited for content that may be objectionable. But in Armstrong's view, "There's nothing dirty about our record."

"They want artists to censor their records in order to be carried in there," he said. "We just said no. We've never done it before. You feel like you're in 1953 or something."

"21st Century Breakdown" contains curses and some references considered adult.

Wal-Mart said that it's the company's long-standing policy not to stock any CD with a parental advisory sticker.

"As with all music, it is up to the artist or label to decide if they want to market different variations of an album to sell, including a version that would remove a PA rating," Wal-Mart spokeswoman Melissa O'Brien said. "The label and artist in this case have decided not to do so, so we unfortunately can not offer the CD."

But bassist Mike Dirnt said: "As the biggest record store in the America, they should probably have an obligation to sell people the correct art."

Not being sold at Wal-Mart didn't stop the band—which kicks off a U.S. tour summer tour in Seattle on July 3—from landing at the top of the album charts this week. "21st Century Breakdown" sold about 215,000 copies since it's debut on Friday.

Michael Douglas: No-nukes world would be good deal

WASHINGTON (AP)—Greed is good. A world without nukes is better.

Actor Michael Douglas, whose performance as the conniving Gordon Gekko in "Wall Street" won him an Oscar in 1987, spent part of Wednesday evening focused on a more critical cause—ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

Douglas moderated a panel of Washington experts on the issue—former Sens. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., and Sam Nunn, D-Ga., and Robert Gallucci, a former U.S. diplomat who was chief negotiator during the nuclear crisis with North Korea in 1994.

Douglas

Douglas questioned Hagel about whether the new Obama administration has provided a transformational opportunity for the world's nuclear-armed nations to address the issue. He pressed Nunn on recent multinational conferences and his recent White House meeting with other former diplomats and President Barack Obama.

Gallucci told the forum gathered at the Italian Embassy that recent discussions between the United States and Russia hold promise, but the threat of nuclear terrorism is a legitimate concern, given the unrest in Pakistan.

The event was sponsored by the Ploughshares Fund, which is dedicated to a nuclear weapons-free world. Hagel and Douglas are members of its board of directors, Douglas since 2005.

Douglas' interest stems from another movie—"The China Syndrome"—the 1979 film about hazards at a nuclear power plant.

Jay-Z confirms split with Def Jam records

NEW YORK (AP)—There will be no encore for Jay-Z and Def Jam.

The rapper confirms reports that he has left the record company where he made most of his biggest hits and went from artist to president, and back to artist again.

In an interview with the Web site RapRadar.com, he thanks the label's executives and calls his time at Def Jam "a unique and fulfilling experience."

Last year, Jay-Z and Live Nation struck a wide-ranging deal that included touring, publishing and albums. Jay-Z had owed Def Jam one more record. A representative for Jay-Z declined to elaborate on his comments.

Parents clash over blasting teen out of bed in morning

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My 16-year-old stepson has problems getting up for school on time. My wife and I are split on what we should do about it.

I maintain that he's old enough to be responsible for getting himself up for school and should suffer the consequences if he's late. She thinks I should get him up. She works the late shift, which means I have to call him several times before he actually gets up. What do you think?

STEPDAD IN WEST VIRGINIA

DEAR STEPDAD: If your stepson is having trouble prying himself out of bed in the mornings, it may be that he's not getting enough sleep and should go to bed earlier. And your wife needs to consider what will happen to him when you are no longer around to extract her son from between the sheets. That's why it's important to start training him NOW.

Buy a clock with a loud, annoying alarm, which should be placed in the farthest corner of his room from the bed, which will force him to get up in order to turn the darned thing off.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Last summer, I cringed when I saw a neighbor cutting his lawn with a push mower and allowing his 3-year-old son to walk behind the mower to "help" him push. All the while, the mother stood nearby, smiling at the "father-and-son moment."

A few days later, I saw an 8-year-old boy cutting his lawn with a riding mower, with no adult in sight.

Abby, please remind parents that a lawn mower is a powerful, potentially dangerous machine. According to a study published in a children's medical journal, more than 9,000 children are injured by lawn mowers each year. Not only is there the obvious danger of the mower blades, children can also suffer severe burns from touching hot mower parts. In addition, projectiles can fly backward and cut or blind a child should a mower strike an object.

When the lawn mower is operating, the proper place for children is inside the house.

CONCERNED NEIGHBOR, DUNWOODY, GA.

DEAR NEIGHBOR: Thank you for the timely reminder. Sometimes the most innocent of actions can have unintended consequences. Spring has sprung, bringing with it all the joys—and chores—of the "growing" season. When a lawn mower is running, children—and pets—should not be in the vicinity.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: With the passing of our parents, as well as childless aunts and uncles, my husband and I have accumulated many special items such as an old family Bible, military memorabilia, photos of pets, etc.

Our departed dear ones are missed and loved, but we don't know what to do with a lot of these things. It feels disrespectful not to keep them. Have you any suggestions on how we can relieve the clutter as well as the guilt—and feel OK about it?

CLUTTERED BUT CARING IN WASHINGTON

DEAR CLUTTERED BUT CARING: Although you have been blessed to be the repository of so many family keepsakes, sometimes an overabundance of "things" can become a burden. When that happens, it's time to take stock and share some of the items with others who can appreciate them.

The Bible and photos should be offered to your state historical society. The military memorabilia could prove to be valuable if you have it appraised by someone who deals in it. The rest could be placed for sale in a consignment store or thrift shop.

Please don't feel guilty about it. It's actually an act of generosity.

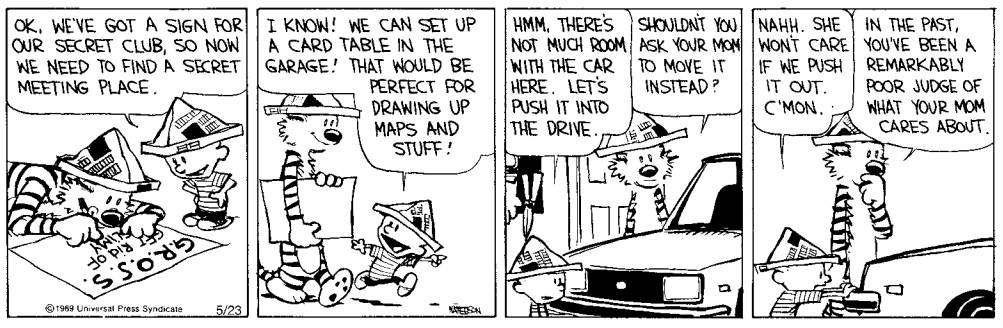
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby—Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


OK, WE'VE GOT A SIGN FOR OUR SECRET CLUB, SO NOW WE NEED TO FIND A SECRET MEETING PLACE.
I KNOW! WE CAN SET UP A CARD TABLE IN THE GARAGE! THAT WOULD BE PERFECT FOR DRAWING UP MAPS AND STUFF!
HMM, THERE'S NOT MUCH ROOM WITH THE CAR HERE. LET'S PUSH IT INTO THE DRIVE.
SHOULDN'T YOU ASK YOUR MOM TO MOVE IT INSTEAD?
NAHH. SHE WON'T CARE IF WE PUSH IT OUT. C'MON.
IN THE PAST, YOU'VE BEEN A REMARKABLY POOR JUDGE OF WHAT YOUR MOM CARES ABOUT.
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5/23

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HMM, A WALNUT TREE
BONK!
ISN'T NATURE GREAT?
IF YOU LIKE CONCUSSIONS!
JIM DAVIS 5-23
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Text GARFIELD to 22646 US ONLY
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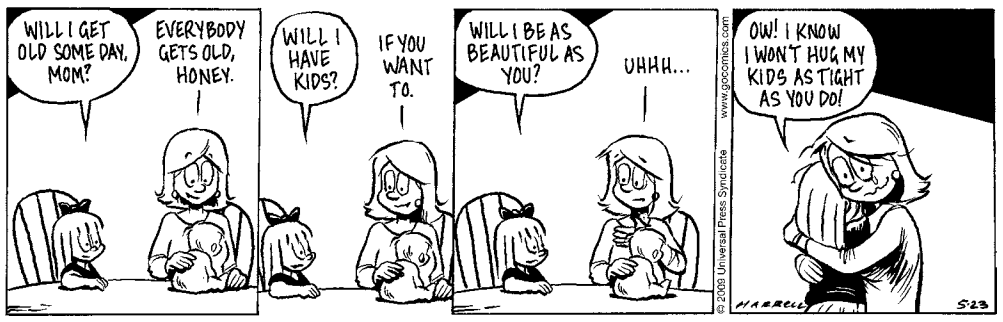
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WILL I GET OLD SOME DAY, MOM?
EVERYBODY GETS OLD, HONEY.
WILL I HAVE KIDS?
IF YOU WANT TO.
WILL I BE AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU?
UHHH...
OW! I KNOW I WON'T HUG MY KIDS AS TIGHT AS YOU DO!
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5-23

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOU KNOW HOW THE GIRLS ARE ALWAYS MAKING FUN OF WHAT LOUSY SHOPPERS WE ARE?
YEAH. THEY THINK WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING.
WELL, NO MORE! LOOK. I'VE WRITTEN OUT AN ACTUAL SHOPPING LIST!
GREAT! SO WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR FIRST?
UH,... FOOD.
5-23 ©Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

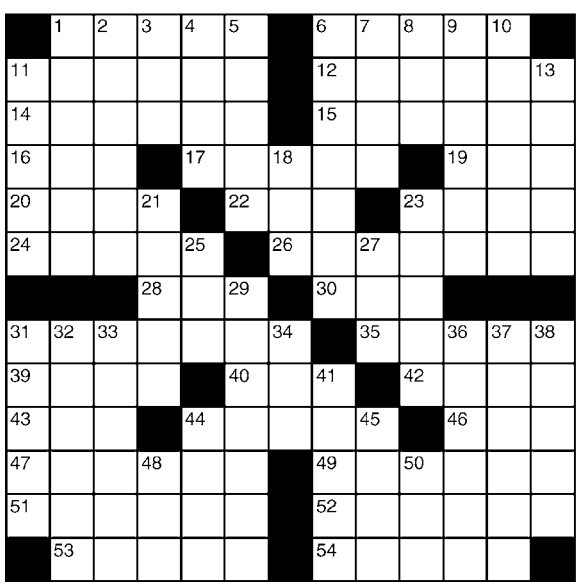
ACROSS
1 Use completely
6 Broadway play, often
11 Mountain chain
12 In a weird way
14 "Praying" bug
15 Ladybug, e.g.
16 Multipurpose truck
17 Surf 'n' turf component
19 Up to, for short
20 Frat party garb
22 Nevertheless
23 Gridlock sound
24 Bloodhound's clue
26 Hall-of-Famers
28 "— the ramparts ..."
30 Anonymous John
31 Less matte
35 Foreheads
39 "The Audacity of —"
40 Nosh
42 Hearts, e.g.
43 Copper head
44 Single
46 Afternoon social
47 Short-horned grasshopper
49 Fruit-eating pest
51 Curiosity-inducing ad
52 Tartan patterns
53 Frightening
54 Colorations

DOWN
1 Bit of algae
2 Misplay at bridge
3 Illustrations
4 Rainbow
5 Vile
6 Engaged in forensics
7 Stench
8 "All the Things You —"
9 Winter wear
10 One
11 Jan of South African history
13 Kennel cries
18 Epitome of slipperiness
21 Unaccompanied
23 Microbrewery output
25 Mainlander's memento
27 Sailor
29 Rocket's comeback
31 Commandment verb
32 Bums
33 Poison remedy
34 Uncultured
36 Ensemble
37 Brandishes
38 Goes no farther
41 Entice
44 One at a PC
45 Sandwich shop
48 — for Africa
50 Quarterback Marino

Solution time: 27 mins.

H	I	N	D	U	■	C	A	P	■	G	P	O
A	T	E	I	N	■	O	W	L	■	E	A	U
D	O	T	E	D	■	B	A	Y	O	N	E	T
■	■	S	T	U	B	B	Y	■	R	O	A	D
E	M	U	■	E	E	L	■	P	I	A	N	O
R	A	K	E	■	G	E	O	D	E	■	■	■
A	G	E	N	D	A	■	C	A	N	N	E	S
■	■	■	D	O	N	U	T	■	T	E	A	K
U	N	T	I	E	■	N	E	O	■	T	R	Y
N	O	O	N	■	B	I	T	O	F	F	■	■
D	R	A	G	N	E	T	■	M	O	L	A	R
E	M	S	■	O	N	E	■	P	R	I	C	E
R	A	T	■	W	E	D	■	H	E	X	E	D

Yesterday's answer 5-23



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kelly Monaco, 33; Jewel, 35; Drew Carey, 51; Marvin Hagler, 55

Happy Birthday: Don't let your emotions get the better of you. If you act instantly, you will get poor results. Instead, observe what everyone else does before making a move. A steady, ready approach will show others you mean business. Home and family should be what keeps your feet on the ground. Your numbers are 11, 14, 19, 23, 28, 30, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Move forward and trust your own judgment. Someone may try to disrupt your plans but, if you persevere, you will win. Move into fast-forward and don't stop until your mission is accomplished. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You'll find it difficult to control your emotions and even harder to keep things from getting blown out of proportion. Confusion regarding a personal matter will be due to a complete misunderstanding. Take the time to hear the truth. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Listen carefully to what's being asked of you so you don't make a costly mistake. Don't shy away from change. An option you are given will turn into a great opportunity. Keep your thoughts to yourself. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Be honest and let your true feelings be heard. Don't fear getting involved with someone who is a little different. You'll learn a lot from the experience and this person is likely to become your greatest ally. Look forward with optimism. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Greed may come between you and a partner. It's best to listen but hold your thoughts until you have secured your position. You need to relieve your stress by taking time out for a little rest and relaxation. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): A vacation can be finalized or you can set out on a mini vacation. Visit friends or family whom you don't often see and you will find out something interesting about your past. A little love will go a long way. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Treat yourself to something special. You can think about the things you'd like to purchase but don't be too eager to put your cash on the table just yet. Someone may try to talk you into something you don't really need. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Put the past behind you and don't give in to emotional issues someone is throwing in your face. Back away from turmoil and seek solace with friends, lovers or anyone or anything that brings you peace of mind. Make changes to your personal life. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Touch up some of the things around your home that need to be fixed. Challenge yourself and you will enjoy the competition you face. An unusual proposal will strike your fancy and lead you into unusual company. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): It's important that you secure your position and make financial changes that ensure you get the most for your money. Your personal papers should be updated to bring you the highest returns. You have to be a forward thinker in times of economic strife. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Get the little tedious jobs out of the way quickly so you can get on to more enjoyable activities. If you owe money, clear your debts and if someone owes you, collect. Don't let someone play an emotional mind game with you. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't sit back when there is so much to do. Put your ideas to the test by presenting them to someone whose criticisms and suggestions you know you can trust. Last-minute improvements will ensure your success. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are an ideas person and an activist. You are caring and passionate and will not give up on anyone or anything. You offer positive affirmation.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				9				
			2			5	3	7
	6	1			7			
	7							6
	4	6				2	5	
3							8	
			9			3	1	
1	9	5			4			
				2				

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/23

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	3	7	1	5	8	2	9	6
5	6	8	3	9	2	1	4	7
1	2	9	7	4	6	3	5	8
2	7	6	4	8	5	9	1	3
3	8	1	2	7	9	5	6	4
9	4	5	6	3	1	7	8	2
7	9	2	8	1	4	6	3	5
6	1	4	5	2	3	8	7	9
8	5	3	9	6	7	4	2	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/22

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

COBBLESTONE STREETS **Solution: 7 letters**

E	B	T	R	E	R	S	N	P	A	S	S	A	G	E
P	P	O	N	O	W	A	H	T	R	A	F	F	I	C
E	A	A	U	E	E	N	A	Y	L	Y	S	I	O	N
D	L	T	C	L	M	D	R	T	T	L	A	I	D	A
E	E	E	C	S	E	E	D	I	R	I	A	A	L	R
S	K	R	I	C	T	V	V	C	E	O	R	M	L	U
T	W	R	V	T	Y	E	A	A	C	U	L	A	S	D
R	S	A	A	I	G	C	E	R	P	I	R	L	R	N
I	E	C	G	N	L	D	L	R	D	U	T	O	E	E
A	S	E	O	O	E	L	(P)	I	T	N	W	I	P	Y
N	R	L	A	D	N	U	A	(A)	N	S	E	P	E	E
S	O	D	N	I	B	S	N	G	(T)	G	I	I	B	S
T	H	U	A	L	L	E	Y	E	E	(H)	G	R	B	U
U	O	G	I	O	E	N	G	L	I	S	H	G	L	A
R	O	C	K	S	T	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	E	C

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Alley, Boulevard, Carriage, Causey, Cities, Clean, Cycling, Endurance, English, Europe, Grip, Hard, Horses, Laid, Lane, Load, Longevity, Natural, Noisy, Passage, Path, Pavement, Pebble, Pedestrians, Public, Rarity, Road, Rock, Rounded, Route, Ruts, Sand, Scatter, Small, Solid, Stability, Streetscape, Terrace, Traffic, Trolley, Villages, Wagons, Weight

Yesterday's Answer: Progress

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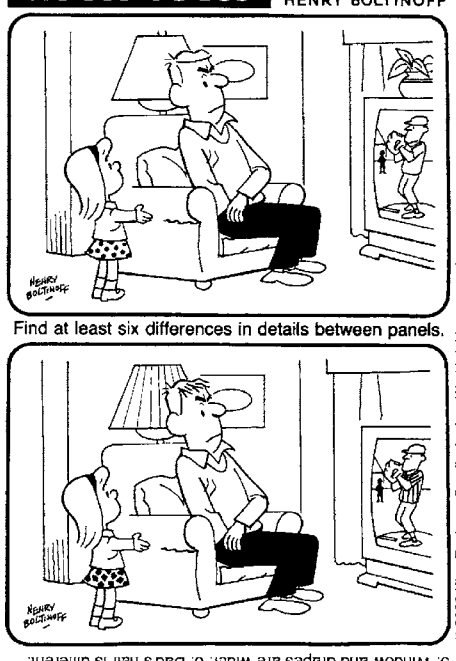
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Lampshade is different. 2. Skirt pattern has changed. 3. Uniform is different. 4. Plant is missing. 5. Window and drapes are wider. 6. Dad's hair is different.

Wishing Well®

4	7	6	7	8	5	6	5	3	4	5	2	3
B	A	L	C	A	I	O	D	A	E	E	R	C
8	4	6	8	2	7	3	7	4	3	7	3	5
N	C	T	E	O	C	H	L	A	A	A	N	A
3	5	2	6	4	5	7	2	8	2	8	5	3
G	L	M	S	U	S	I	A	X	N	C	R	E
8	3	6	7	3	5	2	5	8	3	7	8	5
I	O	O	M	F	E	T	A	T	H	I	I	L
8	3	4	6	7	8	2	5	6	2	3	2	5
N	O	T	F	S	G	I	I	G	C	M	I	Z
4	5	6	2	7	3	6	7	5	8	4	6	2
I	E	R	M	Y	E	E	O	D	D	O	E	P
7	4	8	6	7	2	7	2	4	2	8	2	2
U	U	A	N	R	U	S	L	S	S	Y	E	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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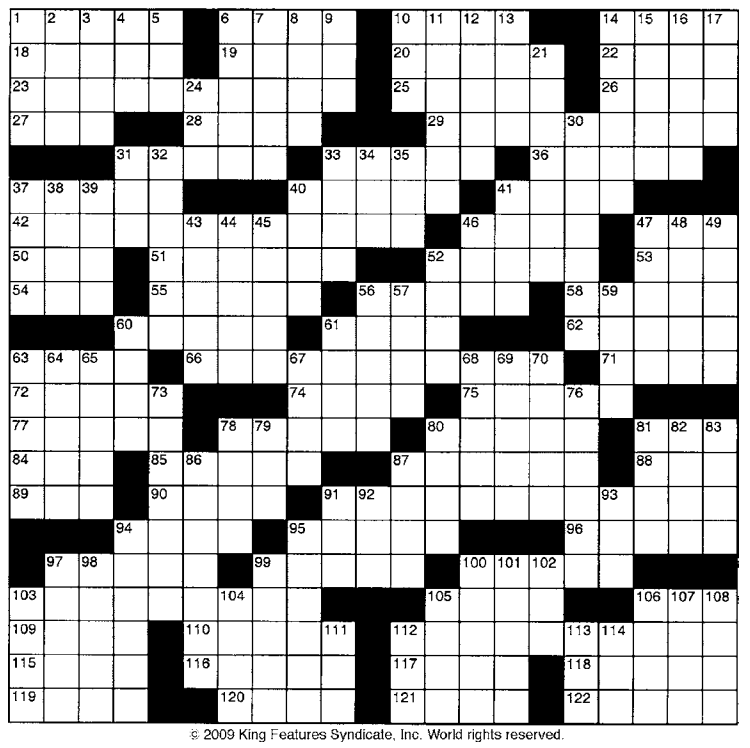
Super Crossword

GET THINGS GOING

ACROSS
1 Florida athlete
6 TV's "Queen for —"
10 Some wines
14 Barrel
18 "Pal Joey" author
19 Hoffmann creation
20 Schemes
22 "All —" ('84 film)
23 View a parade?
25 Sal of "Giant"
26 Parka feature
27 Shaq's pack
28 Palo —, CA
29 Plagiarize?
31 Perplex
33 Mendicant monk
36 Bathe in butter
37 Diminish
40 "The Waste Land" poet
41 Nomad pad
42 Downsize the WBA?
46 Tigris-Euphrates land
47 Globe
50 Neighbor of Tenn.
51 Thiss and thaat
52 Reeves of "Sweet November"
53 Norm
54 Yank opponent
55 Director Kurosawa
56 Nest noise
58 Dodge
60 Exorbitant
61 Any time now
62 Hook on a hawk
63 Exchange
66 Forgo snacks?
71 "Say It — So" ('83 hit)
72 Pool shot
74 Spellbound
75 Birth-related
77 Japanese dog
78 Your neighbor's kids
80 Extinct lemon?
81 Paris' L'— de Triomphe
84 Guitarist Paul
85 Antitoxin
87 Regular
88 Mauna —
89 Chemical ending
90 Tizzy
91 Make the beds?
94 State of confusion
95 Trickster
96 Host a roast
97 Mournful poem
99 Dieter's dish
100 Corday's prey
103 Prepare to wrestle?
105 Paretsky or Teasdale
106 "Well, I'll be!"
109 Kuwaiti ruler
110 Precise
112 Shop till you drop?
115 Hawaii's state bird
116 Ravi-shing instrument?
117 Kid at court
118 What i.e. stands for
119 Genealogy diagram
120 Ward of "Sisters"
121 "Its been —!"
122 Soprano Fleming

DOWN
1 Wedding wear
2 "Pequod" captain
3 "Cheerio!"
4 Mythical monster
5 "Go, team!"
6 In any way
7 Football's Lavelli
8 Designer Gucci
9 "Absolutely!"
10 Tach meas.
11 Bring to light
12 Patron
13 — aerobics
14 Share the mike
15 In progress
16 Cure
17 Converse competitor
21 Tofu source
24 "— Girls" ('79 smash)
30 Feast
31 Enjoyed 30 Down
32 Vanquish
33 Terrier's tormenter
34 Rock's — Supply
35 Lewis stats
37 Out of range
38 Ill temper
39 Jeddah gentleman
40 Singer James
41 Pitfall
43 Vexed
44 Rosey of the Rams
45 Silent star?
46 Cloth finish?
47 Iridescent stones
48 Hazardous gas
49 Sportscaster Musberger
52 Pain in the neck
56 Egg plants?
57 Owl's cry
59 Colorado resort
60 Detect
61 "Git, Garfield!"
63 Prepare perch
64 Rouse
65 Originate
67 Bloomsbury buggy
68 Curry country
69 Facilitated
70 Commando weapons
73 Rub
76 Gibson of tennis
78 Soft cheese
79 Furrow
80 Gen. Robt. —
81 Templeton or Baldwin
82 Learning method
83 Instance
86 Pepsin and lipase
87 Muck
91 Costa del —
92 Green org.
93 CPR provider
94 Lay down the law
95 Imp
97 Glue guy
98 Singer Frankie
99 Condition
100 Mrs. Simpson
101 Sign of spring
102 Seance sound
103 Confined
104 Geometry term
105 Fawn's father
106 Singer Campbell
107 Otherwise
108 Tivoli's Villa d'—
111 Singing syllable
112 Loser's locale
113 "Bei — Bist Du Schoen" ('37 song)
114 Citrus cooler



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. HISTORY: The Battle of Hastings was fought for control of which country?
2. U.S. STATES: How much did the United States pay Russia for the Alaskan territory in 1867?
3. MUSIC: Who wrote and sang "The Theme from Shaft"?
4. LITERATURE: What was the London address of Sirius Black's ancestral home in "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix"?
5. GEOGRAPHY: Where is Mount Vesuvius?
6. TELEVISION: Who played Morticia on "The Addams Family" television series?
7. INVENTIONS: Which scientist played a major role in the invention of peanut butter?
8. ENTERTAINERS: Which entertainer also is known as "The Divine Miss M"?
9. AD SLOGANS: Which company featured the ad slogan: "Because I'm worth it"?
10. FAMOUS QUOTES: Who once said, "A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than you love yourself."

Answers

1. England
2. $7 million
3. Isaac Hayes
4. Number 12, Grimmauld Place
5. Italy
6. Carolyn Jones
7. George Washington Carver
8. Bette Midler
9. L'Oréal
10. Josh Billings

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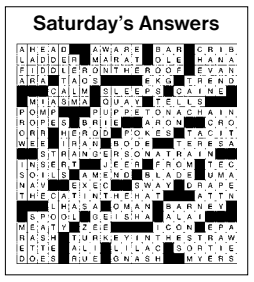
Saturday's Answers

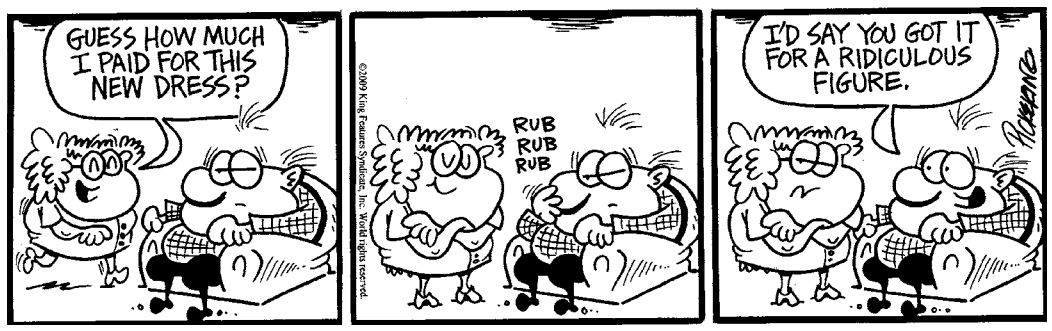


POPEYE
Hy EISMAN
YA KNOW WOT I HEARD, WIMPY?
NO
...IN SPITE OF WOT'S HAPPENIN' ON EARTH...
THE GOVER'MENT IS STILL SPENDIN'MONEY TA SEE IF FOLKS IS ON OTHER PLANETS!
SO?
DON'T Y'SEE? WE NEED THAT DOUGH TA BAIL OUT ALL TH' BANKS AN' SWABS IN TROUBLE HERE!
MAN MUST CONTINUE EXPLORING, BRUTUS!
BUT WOT IF THEY FIND A PLANET WIT' MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ON IT?
THAT WOULD BE A TRIUMPH!
BUT THINK OF THIS...
...WOT IF THEM SWABS AN' BANKS IS IN TH' SAME SHAPE AS US?!
AN' NEEDS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TA BAIL THEM OUT?
WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO GET OBAMA'S BLACKBERRY NUMBER, BRUTUS?
www.kingfeatures.com

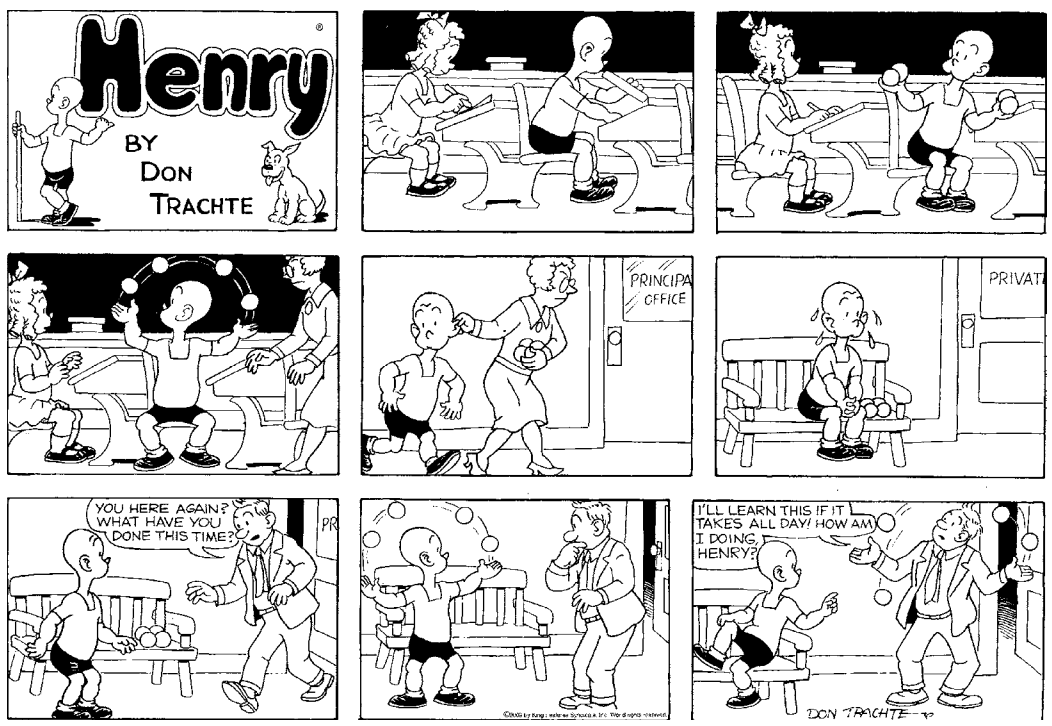
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps

LIFE IS JUST NOT FAIR. MY PARENTS SAY I'M TOO BIG TO BE BABIED....
...BUT I'M TOO LITTLE FOR, WELL, EVERYTHING ELSE!
AT MY AGE WHAT AM I GOOD FOR?
I CAN ONLY GET SO FAR ON MY ADORABILITY.

The Spats by Jeff Pickering



MARK TRAIL
IF THERE WERE A CONTEST FOR THE UGLIEST ANIMAL, TOP HONORS WOULD PROBABLY GO TO THE WARTHOG
HOGS HAVE EXISTED FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS, AND THEY GO BY MANY NAMES - SWINE, PIGS, BOARS, ETC.
THE NORTH AMERICAN RAZORBACK HOG COULDN'T COMPETE WITH THE AFRICAN WARTHOG IN AN UGLY ANIMAL CONTEST, BUT IT WOULD WIN HANDS DOWN IN AN ILL-TEMPERED COMPETITION
TRULY A WILD GAME ANIMAL, THE RAZORBACK GETS HIS NAME FROM THE LONG RIDGE CREATED BY HIS SPINE...
ALTHOUGH SOME HUNTERS SAY HIS NAME REFERS TO HIS SHARP RECURVED TUSKS
THESE EXPOSED FIGHTING TEETH ARE TRIANGULAR IN SHAPE, AND AS THE HOG CHEWS...
...THE LONG LOWER TUSKS RUB AGAINST THE UPPER ONES, HONING A KEEN "RAZORBACK" EDGE ON THESE DANGEROUS WEAPONS
JACK ELROD


Henry
BY DON TRACHTE
PRINCIPAL OFFICE
PRIVATE
YOU HERE AGAIN? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE THIS TIME?
I'LL LEARN THIS IF IT TAKES ALL DAY! HOW AM I DOING, HENRY?
DON TRACHTE

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• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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235- NEWS

Nuggets beat Lakers 106-103 in Game 2

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Similar game, different ending for the Los Angeles Lakers .

Their 24-year playoff dominance of the Denver Nuggets dissipated over the final 29 seconds of the fourth quarter in the second down-to-the-wire game in the Western Conference finals.

That's when Kenyon Martin hit a layup in traffic and Chauncey Billups made 3 of 4 free throws to give Denver a 106-103 victory in Game 2 on Thursday night to even the series.

"It's going to be a long series," Nuggets coach George Karl said.

It was Denver's first playoff win against Los Angeles since 1985, a span of 11 games, the second-longest postseason winning streak against one team in NBA history.

"There was just a demand that we had to win this game," Karl said. "There was an inner spirit. We're a much more smart, mentally tough team than you look at last year and what we are now. It's a great win."

Carmelo Anthony scored 34 points, Billups had 27 points and Linas Kleiza added 16 for the Nuggets. Nene finished with six points, nine rebounds and six assists.

"To get one on the road is always tough. We came in and got it," Anthony said. "We're mentally tough and we showed that in this game coming off the loss that we gave away in Game 1."

Anthony twisted his ankle in the game, but he said he would be fine for Game 3 Saturday in Denver.

Kobe Bryant had 32 points, including making all 10 of his free throws, Trevor Ariza scored a career playoff-high 20 points and Pau Gasol had 17 points and 17 rebounds for the Lakers, who dropped to 7-2 at Staples Center this postseason.

"They have home court advantage now. Now it's time to go to Denver, see if we can do the same," Bryant said. "We're not the best road team in the NBA for no reason."

The Nuggets recovered from poor free throw shooting in a two-point loss in Game 1 to make 17 consecutive foul shots until Billups missed one with 4 seconds remaining. He made the second for the three-point lead.

"I want to kill Chauncey for missing that free throw," Karl said.

Derek Fisher launched a 3-pointer from the right corner that Nene got a piece of as time expired.

AP

Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony, right, reacts after Los Angeles Lakers center Pau Gasol, left, of Spain got called for a foul during the second half of Game 2 in their NBA Western conference final basketball series, Thursday, May 21, 2009, in Los Angeles.

"Nene had a great contest," Billups said. "I don't think Fisher got a good chance to get a good look on the shot. Nonetheless, I was down there trying to rebound and trying to get my hands on the ball again, try to get back on that free throw line."

Fisher thought he did get a good look.

"I figured they were going to try to foul to prevent us from shooting a 3," he said. "I got rid of it a little quicker than I probably had to. Definitely don't want to put yourself in a position where you need that kind of shot to try and tie the game."

Tied at 101, Martin made the layup off Nene's assist that gave the Nuggets the lead for good.

Bryant dribbled upcourt and got into traffic, with Nene tipping the ball away to earn a jump ball with 18 seconds left. Gasol controlled the tip to Ariza, but the ball squirted away and Fisher fouled Billups. He made both for a 105-101 lead.

"Looked to me like Anthony pushed on Trevor and Trevor tried to get rid of the ball, and no foul was called and they recovered the basketball," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said.

Martin then fouled Gasol, who made both before Billups got fouled.

The Lakers were shaky on free throws in the fourth, making 9 of 14, while Denver didn't blink at the line. The Nuggets were 29 of 37, with Billups hitting 13 of 16 and Anthony 10 of 14.

Kleiza's 3-pointer early in the fourth quarter gave the Nuggets an 85-82 lead, their first since the game's opening minutes. Billups followed with two free throws and Anthony hit two straight baskets to extend Denver's lead to 91-84.

Bryant missed a jumper, but he came up big on the Lakers' next possession, hitting a 3-pointer with Anthony's hand in his face. Shannon Brown tossed in a 3 and Lamar Odom made two free throws as part of an 11-2 run that put the Lakers back in front 95-93.

Denver regained the lead before Bryant's 3-pointer, again with Anthony guarding closely, tied the game at 99 with 1:59 remaining. Billups made two free throws before Bryant's jumper tied it at 101.

The Lakers led by 14 early in the second quarter. Anthony began a run of 14 consecutive points for the Nuggets to get them to 51-40. They outscored the Lakers 14-2 to get within 55-54 at halftime.

NBA BRIEFS

Cassell retires, joins Wizards coaching staff

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sam Cassell, who won three NBA titles in a 15-season career, announced his retirement as a player Thursday and immediately joined the coaching staff of the Washington Wizards. Cassell and Randy Wittman, the former head coach of Cleveland and Minnesota, were hired as assistants to new Wizards coach Flip Saunders. "After 15 seasons playing in this league, I have accomplished all that I have dreamed of as a player," Cassell said. "Now the time has come for to me to take my love for the game to the coaching ranks and pass on what I've learned. This team is loaded with talent, and it's a great way for me to start my coaching career." Cassell played in 993 regular season games for eight teams, averaging 15.7 points and 6.0 assists. He won championships with the Houston Rockets in 1994 and 1995 and the Boston Celtics in 2008. He made his only appearance in the All-Star game in 2004, the same season he reached the Western Conference finals with the Timberwolves under Saunders. His former coach had been discussing the job with Cassell even before he accepted the Wizards job in April.

Source: Wolves tap Kahn to head basketball ops

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The Minnesota Timberwolves hired former Indiana Pacers executive David Kahn to run their basketball operations, four days after being rejected by Portland assistant general manager Tom Penn. The move was confirmed to The Associated Press on Thursday by a person with knowledge of the hire. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because an announcement wasn't planned until Friday. Kahn fills the vacancy created when owner Glen Taylor moved vice president of basketball operations Kevin McHale to the bench to replace fired coach Randy Wittman in December. Taylor had said McHale was not a candidate to return to the front office, but the owner was hoping he would return as coach. McHale has been waiting to see who was hired before deciding on coaching. The person familiar with Kahn's hire said it wasn't clear what McHale will do. Also unclear is the status of current Wolves GM Jim Stack and assistant GM Fred Hoiberg. Both were considered in-house candidates for the position and have continued to work on evaluating prospects for the NBA draft. The Timberwolves have the No. 6 lottery pick and two more first-round selections through trades.

Bulls GM Forman: Top goal re-signing Gordon

DEERFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Re-signing guard Ben Gordon will be the top priority of new Chicago Bulls general manager Gar Forman heading into the offseason. Forman met with reporters on Thursday, a day after being promoted to his new position, and he said he believes Gordon wants to stay in Chicago. "There's still a lot of steps until we get to that point," Forman added. Gordon, who becomes a free agent on July 1, played a key role in the Bulls' impressive performance against the defending NBA champion Boston Celtics in the first round of the playoffs. The Celtics won the seven-game series that featured four overtime games. Forman replaced John Paxson, who will remain with the Bulls as executive vice president of basketball operations. Forman is in charge of day-to-day basketball decisions, while Paxson will deal mostly with long-term organizational planning and talent evaluation. Forman was on several college coaching staffs before joining the Bulls as a scout after the 1997-98 season. "One thing I can tell you about Gar is that in the time we've worked together he's very organized, very detailed," Paxson said. "Growing up in basketball, he has coached and scouted and has very, very good eyes for talent and evaluation."

Nitties, Duke share 1st-round lead at Nelson

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Fun-loving PGA Tour rookie James Nitties can get serious, too.

While not shy about his tour bio that lists his special interests as clubbing, girls and movies, the 26-year-old Australian is trying to stay focused on a stretch of tournaments that could culminate with a spot in the U.S. Open.

"It's not easy, but I just made an executive decision where I have to play well over the next five weeks," Nitties said. "It's not just fun and games out here."

Nitties finished with four consecutive birdies for a 5-under 65 Thursday to share the first-round lead at the HP Byron Nelson Championship with Ken Duke, another surprise at the top of the leaderboard.

Duke snapped a streak of 11 consecutive rounds in the 70s to share the first-round lead for only the second time in his 118 career starts. His putt at No. 18 stopped 3 inches from the hole, or he could have had another birdie and the lead alone.

"You think you should do better than you're doing, and then you press the issues and don't just let it come to you," the 40-year-old Duke said. "I guess that's kind of what I've done."

Until the Nelson, when he had five birdies over eight holes after being even through the first eight.

Mike Weir, Scott McCarron, Charles Howell III and Brad Adamonis shot 66s, and Jesper Parnevik and Tommy Armour III were among a group of a dozen players with 67s.

Defending champion Adam Scott started with consecutive bogeys and went on to a 71.

Nitties, who appeared on the Golf Channel's "Big Break" series and finished second at the PGA Tour qualifying tournament last fall, was 1 under through 14 holes. After seeing the scores, he figured he'd be in decent shape with one more birdie.

"The scores, they weren't that good, so it didn't put any pressure on me to do anything crazy," Nitties said. "I was thinking 2 under, I'll be happy with. It's just a solid day."

Nitties then knocked his approach within 5 feet at the 504-yard 15th, and 6 feet at the par-5 16th. After a 13-foot birdie at the 198-yard 17th—his longest made putt of the day—he closed with another 5-footer. "It was not the best ball-striking round, but it was a smart round," Nitties said.

Nitties made the cut in seven of his first 14 tournaments. His best finish was a tie for fourth in the FBR Open at TPC Scottsdale, renowned as the biggest party stop on the PGA Tour. The Nelson also is known for its lively atmosphere.

"There are a lot of good sights out here, but my best result was at one of the biggest party events of the PGA Tour and no one thought I would do half decent in that," Nitties said. "I know when to put distractions and golf into two parts."

As for those special interests listed on his bio, Nitties describes it as "pretty brutally honest" and normal for a single 26-year-old.

"I love going to the movies. I love hanging out with mates and having a couple of drinks in bars and chasing girls," he said. "It's typical of a guy. I'm just the only one that actually says it and doesn't say I like hanging out and fishing, when I really do normal stuff."

Mauer hits grand slam, Twins rout White Sox

CHICAGO (AP)—Joe Mauer hit a grand slam, two doubles and drove in six runs as the Minnesota Twins routed the White Sox 20-1 Thursday, matching Chicago's most-lopsided loss in team history.

Michael Cuddyer, Joe Crede and Matt Tolbert also homered as Minnesota ended a six-game losing streak and made the White Sox pine even more for Jake Peavy.

The White Sox and Padres had agreed to a deal to send the ace pitcher to Chicago, but he turned down the trade, choosing to remain with his longtime team.

Mauer's second career grand slam capped a six-run sixth inning. Tolbert's first big league homer, a three-run shot in the seventh, made it 20-0.

Indians 8, Royals 3

Kansas City, Mo., Victor Martinez drove in three runs and the Indians got past Zack Greinke by getting to the Kansas City bullpen.

Greinke's record stayed at 7-1 with his first no-decision in nine starts. He went six innings, gave up a season-high eight hits and left with a 3-2 lead. His major league-leading ERA crept up to 0.82 from 0.60.

Tigers 4, Rangers 3

At Detroit, Miguel Cabrera hit a go-ahead single in the eighth inning and the Tigers won their sixth straight game, defeating the Rangers.

Curtis Granderson and Clete Thomas homered for Detroit. The Tigers completed their second sweep of Texas this season, and have beaten the Rangers 11 times in a row at Comerica Park.

The Rangers arrived in Detroit this week with an eight-game winning streak, but managed only seven runs in their three losses.

Rays 6, Athletics 5

At St. Petersburg, Fla., pinch-hitter Ben Zobrist tied the game with a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth and Carl Crawford then won it with an RBI single in the Rays victory over the Athletics.

Zobrist got the Rays even at 5 with the homer off Andrew Bailey.

Yankees 7, Orioles 4

At New York, Robinson Cano helped New York race out to a big lead after losing Joba Chamberlain to a leg injury in the first inning, driving in three runs as the Yankees beat the Orioles for their ninth straight win.

Cano hit an RBI double in New York's four-run first and a two-run shot in the second. Melky Cabrera, subbing for a sore Johnny Damon, had a two-run double in the first and Hideki Matsui connected in the fifth to give Yankee Stadium the record for most homers in a ballpark's first 20 games.

Red Sox 5, Blue Jays 1

At Boston, Jason Bay set a Red Sox record with his 11th straight homer with runners on base and Jon Lester rebounded from two bad outings as Boston completed a three-game sweep of the Blue Jays.

Bay hit his 13th homer of the year, a two-run shot in a three-run first inning, and Boston led 5-0 before Aaron Hill singled in Toronto's run in the seventh.

Angels 3, Mariners 0

At Seattle, Juan Rivera, Gary Matthews Jr. and Howie Kendrick accounted for the Angels' first three hits of the game with home runs, and Joe Saunders made the lead stand up over the Seattle Mariners.

Rivera welcomed back Seattle starter Erik Bedard—scratched from his last start with a bad hamstring—by hooking a 3-1 pitch just inside the left-field pole with two outs in the first. Two innings later, Matthews went deep for the first time since Sept. 23, also against Seattle, with a line drive into the Angels' bullpen in left.

AP

Minnesota Twins' Joe Mauer is congratulated in the dugout after hitting a grand slam during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Chicago, Thursday, May 21, 2009.

Phillies 12, Reds 5

At Cincinnati, Chase Utley homered and drove in four runs, and the Philadelphia Phillies' powerful offense overcame another disappointing performance by a starter in a victory over the Cincinnati Reds.

Utley had a two-run single and a double off Micah Owings (3-5), who got nine outs and showed the strain of throwing a lot of innings lately. Utley also had one of the Phillies' four solo homers—Greg Dobbs, Ryan Howard and Raul Ibanez connected, as well.

Nationals 5, Pirates 4

At Washington, Ryan Zimmerman and Adam Dunn had RBI singles in the eighth inning, helping the Nationals end a seven-game skid with a come-from-behind victory over the Pirates.

Cristian Guzman started the decisive rally in the eighth with a one-out single off Tom Gorzelanny (1-1) and moved to second on Nick Johnson's single to center. Zimmerman followed with a tying single to right, the 39th straight game he has reached base safely. Dunn put Washington ahead with the fourth straight single of the inning.

Rockies 9, Braves 0

At Atlanta, Aaron Cook pitched a four-hit shutout and Todd Helton's grand slam ended Colorado's power slump as the Rockies spoiled Kris Medlen's debut with a win over Atlanta.

Cook (3-1) retired the final 16 batters for his second career shutout. He had 20 groundouts and did not allow a baserunner to advance past second for his first win in eight career starts against Atlanta.

Diamondbacks 4, Marlins 3

At Miami, Mark Reynolds hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning and the Diamondbacks took advantage of the Marlins' weary bullpen to rally for a victory.

Reynolds' home run came off Cristhian Martinez, making his major league debut. Florida's relief corps was spent after a doubleheader split Wednesday, capped by Arizona's victory in a 13-inning nightcap that ended at 1:48 a.m.

Cardinals 3, Cubs 1

At St. Louis, Adam Wainwright came within an out of the St. Louis Cardinals' second complete game during a three-game sweep of the Chicago Cubs and Albert Pujols hit a first-inning homer that knocked out the "I" on the Big Mac Land sign in left field.

Wainwright (4-2) allowed five hits in 8 2-3 innings, striking out seven with one walk before Ryan Franklin got Milton Bradley to line out with a man on for his 11th save in 12 chances. The Cubs were limited to two runs in the series and have lost four in a row for the second time this season, and also have dropped five of six to the Cardinals.

Brewers 4, Astros 3

At Houston, Prince Fielder drove in two with a single and Corey Hart had an RBI double in a three-run seventh, and the Brewers rallied for a win over the Astros.

Hunter Pence and Miguel Tejada homered for the Astros, who blew a 3-0 lead after manager Cecil Cooper and first baseman Lance Berkman were ejected for arguing a close call at home plate.

Padres 3, Giants 2

At San Diego, Scott Hairston singled in the winning run to cap a two-run rally in the ninth inning and give San Diego a victory over the Giants.

Hairston's bases-loaded single with two outs off Brian Wilson (2-3) gave the Padres their season-high sixth straight win on a day when ace pitcher Jake Peavy nixed a trade so that he could stay with the Padres.

NFL BRIEFS

Childress says he believes Favre remains retired

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP)—Words about Brett Favre's retirement always include a qualifier, and Vikings coach Brad Childress offered the latest: "As far as I know." Childress declined Thursday to close the door on signing the famously flip-flopping quarterback, who declared for a second time in February he was done with football for good. The coach confirmed for the first time this year, though, that he's spoken with Favre, but said their last contact was "several weeks ago" and solely by phone. "It was worth a conversation," Childress said, "and as far as I know he's still retired." Favre has, at least according to several media reports relying on unnamed sources, considered coming out of retirement in recent weeks while assessing his health. He has a partially torn biceps tendon, which causes pain in his throwing shoulder and prompted him to call it quits after a 2008 season with the New York Jets that started well but ended badly. When the Jets released him this offseason, making him a free agent, Favre said: "Nothing has changed. At this time, I am retired and have no intention of returning to football." Favre's agent, Bus Cook, has repeated a similar line this month while unsubstantiated speculation about Favre's status has swirled around the country, claiming his client remains retired—to the best of his knowledge. Without a no-way, no-how statement from either the Vikings, Favre or his inner circle, well, the possibility won't be forgotten anytime soon. But Childress tried to put it to rest, taking questions from reporters for the first time in three weeks.

Vick home in Va., fitted with electronic monitor

HAMPTON, Va. (AP)—After Michael Vick's first few frenzied hours at home, things seemed to settle down. The media ranks thinned out, and gawkers were leaving after lingering into the early morning hours Thursday, hoping for a glimpse of the suspended NFL star. Once the meeting with local probation officers was out of the way, Vick finally was reunited with his family. "He is obviously delighted to be home," his Virginia-based attorney, Lawrence Woodward, said. And so ended the 28-hour, 1,200-mile journey that began early Wednesday in Leavenworth, Kan. Still, the former Atlanta Falcons quarterback remains a federal inmate, serving two months of home confinement to complete his 23-month sentence for running a dogfighting ring. He cannot speak to the media without permission from the Bureau of Prisons. Efforts to get permission are under way, Woodward said. Vick arrived in a black sport utility vehicle with blackout curtains, part of a four-vehicle caravan carrying a security team and others, and cruised directly into a side garage. Later, he briefly appeared on the deck of his five-bedroom home, as he and a probation officer tested the electronic monitor Vick will wear for two months. Vick will have to check in periodically with the officers, perhaps as early as Friday. He will also be starting his $10-an-hour job as a construction laborer—a condition of his probation.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Toronto	27	17	.614	-
Boston	25	16	.610	1/2
New York	24	17	.585	1 1/2
Tampa Bay	21	22	.488	5 1/2
Baltimore	16	25	.390	9 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	23	16	.590	-
Kansas City	21	20	.512	3
Minnesota	19	23	.452	5 1/2
Chicago	17	22	.436	6
Cleveland	16	26	.381	8 1/2

West Division

Texas	23	17	.575	-
Los Angeles	21	19	.525	2
Seattle	18	23	.439	5 1/2
Oakland	15	23	.395	7

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	22	17	.564	-
New York	21	19	.525	1 1/2
Atlanta	20	20	.500	2 1/2
Florida	19	23	.452	4 1/2
Washington	12	28	.300	10 1/2

Central Division

Milwaukee	26	15	.634	-
St. Louis	24	17	.585	2
Chicago	21	18	.538	4
Cincinnati	21	19	.525	4 1/2
Pittsburgh	19	22	.463	7
Houston	18	21	.462	7

West Division

Los Angeles	29	13	.690	-
San Francisco	19	21	.475	9
San Diego	19	22	.463	9 1/2
Arizona	17	24	.415	11 1/2
Colorado	16	24	.400	12

Yesterday's Games

Philadelphia 12, Cincinnati 5
Washington 5, Pittsburgh 4
Colorado 9, Atlanta 0
Arizona 4, Florida 3
Milwaukee 4, Houston 3
St. Louis 3, Chicago Cubs 1
San Diego 3, San Francisco 2
Detroit 4, Texas 3
Minnesota 20, Chicago White Sox 1
Cleveland 8, Kansas City 3
Tampa Bay 6, Oakland 5
N.Y. Yankees 7, Baltimore 4
Boston 5, Toronto 1
L.A. Angels 3, Seattle 0

BYRON NELSON CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERBOARD

FIRST ROUND

Ken Duke	65
James Nitties	65
Brad Adamonis	66
Scott McCarron	66
Charles Howell III	66
Mike Weir	66
John Mallinger	67
Chris DiMarco	67
Kent Jones	67
Aaron Watkins	67
Colt Knost	67
Jesper Parnevik	67
Tommy Armour III	67
Robert Allenby	67
Kevin Streelman	67
Matt Weibring	67
James Driscoll	67
Spencer Levin	67
Troy Matteson	68
Dustin Johnson	68
Jonathan Byrd	68
D.J. Trahan	68
Steve Lowery	68
Kevin Sutherland	68
Bob Heintz	68
Scott Gutschewski	68
D.A. Points	68
Marc Leishman	68
Greg Chalmers	68
Brian Davis	68
Rory Sabbatini	68
Mark Calcavecchia	68
Michael Letzig	68
Greg Owen	68
Bryce Molder	68
Jay Williamson	68
Kris Blanks	68
Brett Quigley	69
Anthony Kim	69
Y.E. Yang	69
Brian Bateman	69
Joe Ogilvie	69
Ian Poulter	69
Tim Wilkinson	69
Glen Day	69
Fred Couples	69
Scott Verplank	69
George McNeill	69
Alex Cejka	69
Steve Marino	69
Briny Baird	69
Ricky Barnes	69
Danny Lee	69
Jeff Quinney	70
Robert Garrigus	70
Nathan Green	70
Bob Estes	70
Brian Gay	70
Kirk Triplett	70
Daniel Chopra	70
Steve Flesch	70
J.P. Hayes	70
Cliff Kresge	70
Bo Van Pelt	70
Bill Lunde	70
Brendon Todd	70
Heath Slocum	70
Vijay Singh	70
Johnson Wagner	70
Matt Kuchar	70
Darron Stiles	70
Aron Price	70
Matt Bettencourt	71
Ben Crane	71
Stephen Leaney	71
Steve Allan	71
Tim Petrovic	71
Chad Campbell	71
Charley Hoffman	71
Ryuji Imada	71
Todd Hamilton	71
Bart Bryant	71
Jimmy Walker	71
Chris Riley	71
Jason Bohn	71
J.J. Henry	71
Jeff Maggert	71
John Senden	71
Adam Scott	71
Hunter Mahan	71
Marc Turnesa	71
James Oh	71
Rod Pampling	72
Chez Reavie	72
Brad Faxon	72
Mathias Gronberg	72
John Rollins	72
Rich Beem	72
Webb Simpson	72
David Berganio Jr.	72
Vaughn Taylor	72
Michael Bradley	72
Greg Kraft	72
Shaun Micheel	72
Jeff Klauk	72
Martin Laird	72
Kevin Na	72
Bill Haas	72
Shigeki Maruyama	72
David Mathis	72
Gary Woodland	72
Chris Stroud	72
Jonathan Kaye	73
Dean Wilson	73
Ryan Palmer	73
Carl Pettersson	73
Charlie Wi	73
Nicholas Thompson	73
Notah Begay III	73
Roland Thatcher	73
Davis Love III	73
Harrison Frazar	73
Peter Lonard	73
Rick Price	73
Wil Collins	73
Troy Kelly	73
Brendon de Jonge	73
Peter Tomasulo	73
David Toms	74
Jarrod Lyle	74
Dean Larsson	74
Casey Wittenberg	74
Jeff Overton	74
Tom Pernice Jr.	74
Ted Purdy	74
Leif Olson	74
Scott Piercy	75
Tyler Aldridge	75
Dave Schultz	75
Brian Vranesh	75
Stuart Appleby	75
Justin Leonard	75
Tim Herron	75
Steve Elkington	75
Jose Coceres	76
Billy Mayfair	76
Mathew Goggin	76
Ryan Moore	76
Matthew Borchert	76
Kevin Stadler	77
Corey Pavin	77
Derek Fathauer	78
Eric Axley	80
Jaxon Brigman	70
Michael Schachner	77

By The Associated Press

Bright and early start for Run 4 Ron II

Run 4 Ron II, a fundraiser for Filipino runner Ronald Villafria's quest to scale Mt. Fuji a second time, will have a 5:30-6am showtime and a go time of 6am tomorrow at the American Memorial Park amphitheater.

Villafria said prizes await the Top 3 in the 5-kilometer run, while those not fast enough to finish ahead of the pack will still get their chance of winning a couple of mobile phones in the raffle.

The entry cost is $15, which includes a raffle ticket and an event T-shirt. Those wishing to have more chances at winning in the raffle, which also offers other prizes, can buy extra tickets for a $1 each.

Run 4 Ron II will begin at the AMP amphitheater and will have runners proceed to the Micro Beach pavilion before going right toward the old Puerto Rico dumpsite and back.

Last year, a total of 120 signed up for the first Run 4 Ron fundraiser with 70 taking part in the actual run.

Proceeds from Run 4 Ron II will help defray Villaria's expenses in taking part in the 2009 Fuji Mountain Race, or Fuji Tozan Race.

Villafria

Villafria took part in the 2008 edition of the race in July 25, 2009, and finished the 36-kilometer trek up and down the 12,388-foot mountain in four hours and 20 minutes.

The Mt. Fuji Marathon or Fuji Tozan Race is composed of two legs, a 15-kilometer race to the fifth station of the mountain and a 21-km race all the way to the top. The final six-kilometers of the race is also a trail run.

Villafria was one of only 6,000 participants that have been prescreened to take part in the 2009 edition of the Fuji Mountain Race. ***(Mark Rabago)***

RGA May Ace this Sunday

The Refaluwasch Golf Association will hold its May Ace of the Month Tournament this Sunday, May 24, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course.

Check in time is 11am with tee off set an hour later at 12pm at the Kagman golf venue.

Score to beat is the net 68 carded by Nick Sablan in RGA's monthly qualifier two weekends ago during the Mt. Carmel Golf Tournament.

Sablan actually finished tied with Asterio Tawanpiy, but beat him out in a scorecard tiebreak.

The former national golfer carded a 35-38 in the front and back nines to finish with a gross score of 73, which minus his 5 handicap have him the score to beat.

Tawanpiy also came away with a net 68 (76, 38-38, 8 handicap), but lost in the front nine net to Sablan, 32.5 to 34.

Jesse Seman, Jess Wabol, and J.J. Atalig all finished with identical net scores of 70, but the latter took third on a scorecard tiebreak. Wabol was fourth followed by Seman.

In related news, Wabol, who is also RGA's tournament coordinator, is encouraging current and past members to pay the club's annual membership fee, which will remain at $25 because of the current economic crisis.

For more information about RGA's May Ace of the Month tourney and the rest of its tournaments for 2009, contact president Jordan Kosam at 483-4506 or Wabol at 288-1129. ***(PR)***

KOD qualifiers to begin next month

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The series of qualifying rounds for the Saipan leg of the 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Diamonds Softball Tournament will start next month at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The first qualifying round is set for June 13 and 14, while the next two are scheduled for Aug.1 and 2, and Sept. 26 and 27. The fourth/consolation round will be held on Oct. 3 and 4, while the Tournament of Champions-Saipan leg is set for Oct. 17 and 18.

Teams eligible for the Tournament of Champions must place first in one of the first three rounds. Teams aiming to qualify for the fourth/consolation round should participate in at least two of the first three rounds. Winner of the consolation round will then advance to the Tournament of Champions-Saipan Leg to play three other teams.

The victor of the Saipan leg will represent the CNMI to the 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Diamonds Softball Tournament and will play teams from Guam, Palau, and Pohnpei.

Saipan will host the four-island tournament from Nov. 12 to 15.

Shell Marianas, which was composed of the same players from three-time titlist No Ka Oi, ruled last year's Saipan leg after downing, SaiPal, 10-2.

Shell Marianas also topped the first two qualifying tournaments of the KOD, while SaiPal prevailed in the third qualifying round after stunning Shell Marianas in the winners' bracket of the playoffs. In the Final Four, Shell Marianas took the No. 1 spot, Natibu was seeded No. 2, and SaiPal was ranked No. 3. Total Chaos was No. 4, as it defeated SUFA, 14-11, in the wildcard qualifier.

15 FIGHTS

From Page 28

(14 wins, 4 losses) vs. Marianas Elite's Maitai "The Charger" Charley (2-4) in the 150-lb. weight class;

■ Ginaldo "Gago" Aniceto of the Philippines (0-0) debuting against fellow MMA rookie Junjie "Tiger" Choi of China (0-0) in the 130-lb. weight class;

■ Louie Crisostomo (independent, 0-1) vs. Tinian's Johmar Untalan (0-2) in the 150-lb. weight class;

■ Trench Tech's Chris "No Luv" Laayug (4-1) vs. street fighter Kevin Esteves (1-1) in the 140-lb. weight class;

■ Trench Tech's Joe Park (0-0) vs. Pwang's Eddie Paulis (0-1) in the 125-lb. weight class;

■ Trench Tech's Mark "The Dark" Nuique (2-0) vs. Mesngon Bros.' Joe Taga (0-0) in the 145-lb. weight class;

■ Trench Tech's Alverick "Pretty Boy" Alvarez (3-0) vs. Haga's C.J. "Face" Takai (1-4) in the 135-lb. weight class;

■ Guam's Ray "Infimous" Apia (1-0) vs. Mesngon Bros.' Jun "The Ledgen" Taga (0-1) in the 150-lb. weight class;

■ Guam's Tyler Perrot (0-0) vs. Palau's Snyder Ongill (0-0) in the in the 215-lb. weight class;

■ Fiden Teregeyo (0-1) vs. Lee Reyes (0-1) in the in the 141-lb. weight class;

■ Trench Tech's Slade "The Rage" Adelbai (7-3-1) vs. Guam's Troy "The Destroyer" Munoz (2-2) in the 190-lb. weight class; and

■ Japan's Joji Matsunaga (1-0) vs. a still unnamed fighter in the in the 160-lb. weight class.

Doors for Rites of Passage 7: Fists of Fury open at 6pm and the fights start at 7pm. Tickets for are sold for $25 and are available at Boarderline, 670 Rocksteady Shop, Hannam Market, Mobil Kagman, Flair bar, and Trench Tech Gym.

For more information on Rites of Passage 7: Fists of Fury or mixed martial arts in general, contact Trenc Tech president Cuki Alvarez at 483-4MMA.

MDX

From Page 28

baskets from Samson in a span of less than a minute finally put an end to Gigolos' rally.

Montano led all scorers with his 36 points, making 12 of them from downtown, while Sublemente and Martin Moreno chipped in 11 apiece. Bong Malasarte and Samson also finished in double figures, tallying 10 points each.

With Montano connecting from outside, making three early triples, MDX took a 24-13 lead at the end of the first period.

Gigolos played catch up from thereon and seemed headed for an upset with De La Torre and Edil Carino leading the team's recovery in the fourth quarter. However, Garapan's offensive set in the last four minutes of the game saw De La Torre having limited touches and Carino making only three free throws.

De La Torre still top-scored for Gigolos with 18 points, firing 10 of them in the fourth. Adonis Macoto and Carino added 17 and 15 markers, respectively.

MDX 91 – Montano 36, Sublemente 11, Martin 11, Malasarte 10, Samson 10, Canedo 9, Galulu 2.

Gigolos 80 – De La Torre 18, Macoto 17, Carino 15, Fernandez 8, Domingo 8, Galzote 4, Abuy 4, Abuan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 24-13, 49-38, 69-57, 91-80.

UFO

From Page 28

UFO last hosted the inter-organization caging in 2005 with SIP topping Cabalen in a best-of-three title series, 2-1. SIP won Game 1, 88-79, but failed to sweep the series when Cabalen took Game 2, 99-85. SIP ended the series with a 95-86 victory in the deciding Game 3, notching its fourth title in six years of joining the league.

SIP also dominated the individual awards in the 2005 edition of the league. Edsel Mendoza was chosen Finals MVP, while Elmer Esdrelon made it to the Mythical Five, joining Mendoza, Andres "Jhun" Estolas of LIPS-Mobil, and Ronald Delos Reyes and Dalewin Cortez of Cabalen.

SIP gunner Bryan Flores was best in three points, Jawn Joyner and Bing Marasigan of Visminda were best in assists and free throws, respectively, Cortez was best in block shots, Chris Domingo of Cavite-Country House was best in steals, Marlon De Dios of MDX Amateur Radio-Armatech was best in rebounds, and Rowel Aranda of LIPS-Mobil was the top scorer for the season.

Twelve teams joined the 2005-2006 edition of the UFO caging.

For more information, contact UFO president Olive Yana at oliveyana@yahoo.com, Melvin Malvar at mjmalvar@yahoo.com, Paul Madriaga at madriaga@pticom.com, or Leo Canedo at lcanedo69@gmail.com. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

Bright and early start for Run 4 Ron II

Run 4 Ron II, a fundraiser for Filipino runner Ronald Villafria's quest to scale Mt. Fuji a second time, will have a 5:30-6am showtime and a go time of 6am tomorrow at the American Memorial Park amphitheater.

27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Nuggets beat Lakers 106-103 in Game 2

Similar game, different ending for the Los Angeles Lakers.

25

Saipan Senior League All-Stars named

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Little League Baseball has named a 16-man Senior All-Star Team that will compete against Tinian in next month's 2009 District Tournament.

The Saipan Senior All-Stars are led by six players from 2009 champion Tan Holdings Fielders. Joining them are four players from pennant champions Jets, three from D-9ers, two from Lion King, and one from Ol'Aces.

Included in the Saipan Senior All-Stars lineup are Fielders' Jonathan Celis, Juan Maratita, Nokki Saralu, Peter Tenorio, Tom Agulto, and Ton Aguon; the Jets' Eli Augenbaugh, Harry Nakamura, Joe Palacios, and Joshua Jones; D-9ers' Dave Jones, Eric Tenorio, and Mart Sablan, and the Ol'Aces' Mike Iguel.

Patrick Tenorio is the Senior All-Stars manager, while Jonathan Tenorio and John Manibusan are the coach and assistant coach, respectively.

Patrick Tenorio, in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* Thursday night, said they are not taking their Tinian lightly, as anything can happen in the district meet.

He added coaches, players, and managers should take a cue from the similar incident in the Junior and Senior League playoffs. Protests on uniform violations marred the playoff round of the two divisions.

Patrick Tenorio said issues on technicalities can cost a team a lot, so players, managers, and coaches must be extra cautious and look at all aspects of the game.

The district meet will run from June 5 to 7 at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield and at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield with Junior and Major All-Stars from Tinian also competing against SLLB's bets.

Winners of the three-day event will represent the CNMI to the 2009 Asia Pacific Regional Tournament.

The regional meet for the Majors will be held in Chinese-Taipei from July 5 to 12, while Jakarta, Indonesia will host the regional tournament for Juniors, Seniors, and Big League from June 23 to 28.

Tinian and Rota do not have Big League All-Stars, so Saipan's Big League All-Stars automatically earn a trip to the regionals.

Victors of the regional tournaments will advance to the World Series.

The CNMI Big League All-Stars made it to last year's World Series in Easley, South Carolina.

Nokki Saralu, seen here pitching against Kagman Lion King, is one of the six Fielders players named to the Saipan Senior All-Stars who will face Tinian in the 2009 District Tournament on Saipan next month.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

15 fights slated for ROP 7 tonight

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Fifteen action-packed fights are in store for local mixed martial arts enthusiasts in Rites of Passage 7: Fists of Fury set tonight at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

Squaring off in the main event will be former PXC heavyweight champion Manny "The Enforcer" Chong against Ton "Peskadot" Robert in a super heavyweight (275 lbs.) match-up for the ages.

Taitano

TRENCH TECH

Chong comes in the match the more experienced fighter with a 12-6 win-loss card, while Robert so far has had an up-and-down MMA career with his 2-2 record.

The semi main event, meanwhile, has been billed as "Saipan tough guy vs. Japan Shooto's top-ranked fighter" and will see 130-pounders Jay "Taby" Muna grappling with Jess "The Spiderman" Taitano.

With a record 6-4-2, Taitano is favored against Muna, who comes into the fight sporting a 3-5 slate.

Another fight to watch is the bout between Universal Reality Combat Championship bantamweight titleholder Justin "The Shocker" Cruz and Saipan's very own Derick "El Peligro" Rangamar. The two will tangle in the 140-lb. division.

The 12 undercard matches are the following:

■ Trench Tech's Gio "Palaxi" Sablan

See 15 FIGHTS on Page 27

UFO caging kicks off tomorrow

Action in the 7th United Filipino Organization Inter-Organizational Basketball League will start tomorrow at the JP Center Basketball Court in Garapan.

Eight teams will be vying for this year's championship, namely Samahang Ilokano at Pangasinense, Bayani, VisMinDa, Samahang Manggagawang Filipino, MDX, Cabalen, Northern Marianas Bartenders Association, and NAMFREL.

The opening ceremony will start at 3pm.

SIP, which won the last edition of the league, will be playing in the opening game with its foe to be determined via a draw.

UFO caging is returning this season after thee years of absence.

See UFO on Page 27

MDX keeps Navy Hill finals bid alive

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MDX Armatech's Leo Canedo pulls up for a running jumper against Garapan Gigolos' James Abuy, center, and Al Fernandez, left, during their playoff game in the Masters division of the Navy Hill caging Thursday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

MDX Armatech remained in contention for a championship ticket in the Masters division of the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League following its 91-80 victory over Garapan Gigolos Thursday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

MDX now has a 1-1 record in the three-team playoffs and is hoping that pennant champion Chalan Kanoa Legends win against Gigolos tomorrow to arrange an MDX-Legends title tiff. The Legends downed MDX Tuesday night, 82-74.

If Gigolos upset the Legends, all three teams will have identical 1-1 slates and a quotient system will be in effect to break the deadlock. The team with the highest points in the quotient system will advance to the finals, while the last two will battle for the last finals seat.

The backcourt trio of Bernard Montano, Butch Sublemente, and Nelson Samson kept MDX in the fight, canning crucial baskets that foiled Gigolos' repeated comeback attempts.

Garapan, behind Ferdie De La Torre's inside baskets, moved within four, 73-77, with less than three minutes left in the game.

Montano, who had a good shooting night, nailed a long jumper to widen the gap, and then broke the Gigolos' offensive set, allowing Sublemente to make an easy layup and give MDX an eight-point cushion, 81-73, going into the last two minutes of the game.

Garapan moved within five, 83-78, with over a minute left in the fourth period, but back-to-back

See MDX on Page 27